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VOLUME 8, NUMBER 1

Publisher: Lawrence Sapadin
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Marionette, Inc.
(718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBoer
113 E. Center St.,
Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeeza Typography
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a not-for-profit, tax-exempt educational foundation dedicated ta the promotion of video and film, and by the Association af Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc. (AIVF), the national trade associatian af independent producers and individuals involved in independent video and film. Subscription is included with membership in AIVF. Together FIVF and AIVF provide a broad range of educatianal and professional services for independents and the general public. Publication of **The Independent** is made passible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endawment far the Arts, a federal agency.

The Independent welcames unsolicited manuscripts. Manuscripts cannot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included. Na responsibility is assumed for loss or damage.

Letters to **The Independent** should be addressed ta the editor. Letters may be edited far length.

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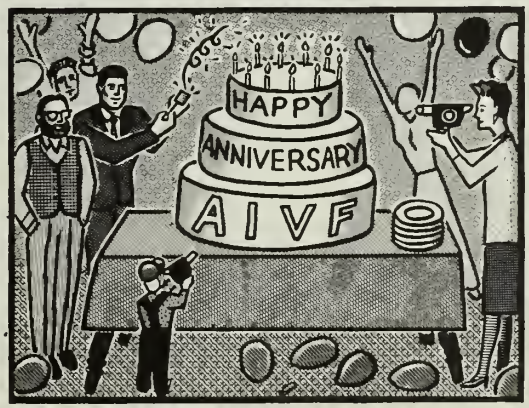
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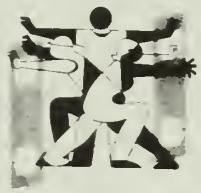
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LETTERS

FAIR SHARE

To the editor:

Your article entitled "Summer Summit" [Renee Tajima, "Media Clips," October 1984] has prompted me to write you. There are certain conclusions which we at the Program Fund do not feel are warranted by the actions of the legislation.

The author infers from the quoted section of the House report accompanying CPB's Authorization Bill (HR 5541) that independents have a "role in shaping public broadcasting programming." Actually, the report refers to independent work as an indispensable element of program source diversity for the entire public broadcasting system. The characterization made by the article suggests a greater policy role for independents than even the partisan House committee anticipated.

The article sidesteps the issue of why the legislation itself did not reflect any changes in language. It suggests that legislators wanted to avoid opportunities for opponents of public broadcasting. This is true enough; however, the committees also did not agree with the independent position on many issues, such as statutory set asides.

The article goes on to state that "both the House and Senate affirmed the exclusion of the *Frontline* series from the category of independent funding." The Senate report made no mention of *Frontline.* The House report referred to *Frontline* as a source of concern because it had been designated as an independcent production. The report went on to acknowledge CPB's decision to discontinue counting the series *Frontline* as *currently produced* as an independent production and noted that this decision was consistent with the congressional mandate to devote a substantial portion of the Program Fund to independent producers and production entities. The House report did not, as was reported in the article, "establish the principle that final edit is an essential element of independent production—a definition that goes beyond what the law requires"; rather, the House report seemed to endorse the CPB definition. In addition, I might add, the *Frontline* staff is making certain changes in their structure and procedures which we hope will enable independents working for them again to be counted.

Last, Larry Sapadin's statement that if the supplemental funding bill passed, the Program Fund director has indicated that $1-million of the fund would be stipulated for independents in the August 1984 Open Solicitation. What I said in fact is included in a letter to Larry Sapadin and the AIVF dated March 23, 1984. The letter refers to supplemental funding in two places. In the first instance, it says, "If as a result of the supplemental appropriation for CPB FY '84, FY '85, and FY '86 the amounts of money available to the Program Fund increase substantially, the Program Fund expects to allocate substantial amounts of those increases to the Open Solicitation funding process or similar funding structures that may be established by the Program Fund." The letter later goes on to state, "If CPB receives a supplemental appropriation for FY '84 that results in an increase in the amount available for program production, then for FY '84 only the Program Fund will allocate a substantial amount of such increase for financing productions by independent producers. Perhaps this will be accomplished by special solicitation for proposals from independent producers." In FY '84 the Program Fund received an additional $1-million as a result of the supplemental and has added $400,000 of that to the August Open Solicitation for independent productions. The announcement will be made as to which independents from that round of solicitations have received the monies shortly.

I hope this response makes clear the Program Fund's interpretation of the past summer's events as reported in your article.

—Ron Hull
Director, CPB Program Fund

Renee Tajima replies:

First, it seems odd for Ron Hull to argue that independents do not have a "role in shaping public broadcasting programming" when CPB regularly claims to be distributing 40% of its national production funds to independent producers.

With respect to the shaping of public broadcast *policy,* independents have played a signficant role for some time, including testimony before the Carnegie Commission on public broadcasting in 1978, testimony before Congress on every CPB funding bill since 1977, participation in CPB's own Five Year Planning Committee, numerous presentations to the CPB Board and, most recently, in negotiations and policy meetings with CPB's Program Fund and management staff.

Concerning these recent meetings, the Senate said:

> "The Committee approves the decision to schedule regular meetings between the Fund and the independent producers, and believes that good faith negotiations among the interested parties is consistent with Congressional intent. Ongoing meetings between the Program Fund and representatives of independent producers will provide a structure whereby the Committee can be alerted to problems in the procedures used to allocate Federal funds for public broadcast programming. The Committee will monitor CPB's progress in achieving the desired goals."

And from the House:

> "CPB and a group of independent producers have conducted meetings over the last several months in an effort to reach agreement on many of these issues and to forge a more productive working policy for the future. . . The Committee welcomes these recent efforts of CPB in that they evidence strides being made in the direction of strengthening the ties between the broad creative and innovative independent production community and the more established components of public broadcasting. While CPB has made a positive step in the right direction, the Committee urges CPB, public television stations, and independents to continue to work together to ensure that the Program Fund operates to provide high quality programming from a wide range of sources."

Second, recognition that editorial control is an essential element of a definition of independent production is implicit in CPB's agreement to exclude *Frontline.* This agreement was reached in negotiations with AIVF and other representatives and cited with approval in the House Report.

Finally, Hull's March 23, 1984 letter notwithstanding, at the July 24, 1984 policy meeting with independents, Hull is indeed reported to have said that if CPB's full supplemental appropriation of $15-million were approved for 1984 (of which about $2.5-million would go into the Fund), $1-million would be put into Open Solicitations. Since, in the end, Congress significantly reduced the appropriation, the specific dollar commitment became academic. We are pleased to hear that an additional $400,000 has become available for independent production.

APPLIERS BEWARE

To the editor:

I would like to correct a significant misstatement in "An Independent Primer for University Film and Video Association" [Betsy McLane, "Field Report," November 1984] which says that I suggest applicants "get to know panelists personally through telephone calls and visits, as well as letters." I cannot think of more inappropriate advice to Endowment applicants—if there's one thing we've learned over the years, it's the uniformly negative response of panelists to any type of "lobbying" on the part of applicants. I'm concerned that applicants might seriously jeopardize their opportunities for funding by heeding this "advice." Applicants *should* feel free to call or visit Endowment staff members, as one of our functions is to represent applicants' goals clearly to panelists.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate FIVF on its tenth anniversary. We are proud of the work you and your members have done, both individually and collectively, and look forward to your continuing success.

—Perrin Ireland
Art Specialist, NEA Media Arts Program

SECOND POSITION

To the editor:

As a member of the Board of Directors of Dance Films Association (DFA), I am writing in response to Deborah Erickson's description of the Dance on Camera Festival ["Pterodactyl Lake," November 1984].

Erickson, who has never attended any sessions of our annual festival, has nevertheless felt qualified to comment. In addition, she has focused on only one of our organization's several functions. (She need only have referred to the half-column advertisement on page 6 of the same issue in which her article appeared to have read about some of the new services we are making available, specifically involving videotape, in our New York City offices.) Furthermore, her infor-

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ARC VIDEO DANCE

mation on publicity for the 1984 festival is totally erroneous. Forty-four film and video publications and 17 dance publications, in addition to the "usual sources" like the *New York Times,* all received our publicity information, and more than 250,000 copies of brochures describing the festival were distributed in the New York City area. The number of entries received in 1984 was not substantially different from those received in previous years, although the mix of films and videotapes has shifted dramatically toward the latter.

Our Board is very aware that Dance on Camera can and should grow in stature as an international festival. I sincerely doubt, however, that describing it as an event on the verge of extinction is the kind of help we need in nurturing that growth. For years, Susan Braun, our executive director, has been operating heroically on an extremely limited budget and deserves our congratulations for the survival of our organization and the festival, rather than criticism for its failure to grow at a rate of which Erickson would approve. We appreciate a little credit for effort and good faith and welcome constructive suggestions and involvement from the dance/ film/video community.

—Jonathan R. Bell
New York City

Deborah Erickson replies:

The purpose of *The Independent*'s festival column is to provide film and videomakers with information, not publicity material. Discussion of an organization's non-festival activities is irrelevant. It is my responsibility to make appraisals based on all the sources I consult—17 people were interviewed for this article. Braun and DFA board member Virginia Brooks said the festival's publicity consisted of some 100 flyers mailed to publications with free listings; your letter presents an even lower figure. Two hundred fifty thousand brochures were never mentioned to me; I would have included such information, had it been given. However, I stand by my evaluation of Dance on Camera, and feel strongly that the excellent dance films and videos being produced in this country deserve support; I hope your board can organize a strong event to showcase this art form.

SERIOUS BUSINESS

To the editor:

Coping with the recent demise of the two foremost experiments in short film distribution, ICAP and Serious Business Company, has been difficult for all concerned. However, it strikes me as an unfair comparison for Debra Goldman ["Media Clips, November 1984] to preface the announcement of ICAP's closing with the assertion that "it falls short of disaster" because, unlike Serious Business Company, ICAP leaves no debts to filmmakers. The overall impression is that ICAP was an unswerving support to filmmakers, but was stabbed in the back by NYSCA's funding cut, while Serious Business simply failed (a crime in itself in our particular economic culture)—and, owing money, is doubly suspect.

As a filmmaker who was handled by both organizations, I must say that whatever financial debt Freude Bartlett's Serious Business Co. owed me was more than compensated by her extraordinary efforts during the 10 years of our association. Freude was a brilliant and tireless promoter of a widely diverse collection of short films: experimental animation to documentaries on health and feminist issues. She took films other distributors wouldn't touch with a 10 foot pole and carved a significant niche for them among the normally staid nontheatrical heartland.

Freude did not have any government or foundation funding to support her company. During the final two years of Serious Business, when most economic indicators were turned against our field, Freude was engaged in a courageous campaign to secure a bank loan to expand, which, in the cruel logic of our system, often means mere survival. When the banks balked, the "smart" alternative would have been bankruptcy. Freude opted instead for a percentage pay-back to the filmmakers which meant that no one was left completely empty-handed. Today, more than a year later, she is still acting as a reference service for ongoing calls and correspondence.

—George Griffin
New York City

Debra Goldman replies:

I cannot take credit for Griffin's "overall impression" of my account of ICAP's demise and its relation to the equally unfortunate failure of Serious Business Company. Bartlett's decision not to declare bankruptcy and pay her filmmaking clients gradually [see Media Clips, October 1983] is a testament to her dedication—but it is neverthless a burdensome and time-consuming task, which, in the best of all possible worlds, she would never have had to undertake. Serious Business, like ICAP, was a *victim* of the shrinking short film market. It is a "disaster" for the field when small distributors like Bartlett cannot survive.

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TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

Debate over the definition of "independent" resurfaced once again when the California Arts Council (CAC) turned down a funding proposal from the Los Angeles affiliate of the Independent Feature Project (IFP/West) in October. The 700-plus member group had received one prior grant of $6,600 from CAC the previous year.

IFP/West was angered by the rationale behind the decision of the six-member film and video panel which rejected the request. According to IFP/West's director Lynette Mathis, CAC cited IFP's presumed lack of substantive services, said that the group was not fulfilling its claim to promote and support independent filmmakers, and mentioned the heavy competition for state dollars. (Larry Larson, director of CAC's grants program, estimates that 400 to 500 applicants in all disciplines were rejected for funding this year.) But the clincher seems to be the core of the panel's criticism was the question of IPF/West's "too heavy industry orientation." Says Larson, "It centered on the disagreement as to what the role of the independent really means. IFP sees independent as non-studio financed. Our panel sees it as a little more than that. Not just low-budget work, but more of an aesthetic issue."

IFP/West officials agreed that the two parties did not see eye to eye on the independent identity, and questioned CAC's role in defining, or "dictating," the term. In a letter to CAC's chair Consuelo Killens, IFP/West president Victoria Wozniak pointed out, "The IFP/West exists to support films in which the vision of the primary creators (producer, writer, director, actor, etc.) is realized without significant alteration by the sources of financing. Whether a film is traditional or avant garde, studio produced or independently financed, it is 'independent' if the filmmakers—and not the lawyers and accountants—are in charge. This viewpoint is more inclusive than that put forth by the Arts Council, which would seem to define only 'art for art's sake' films as independent."

But panelists questioned the balance of IPF/West's programs. "Overall, my feeling was that they seemed to be just a little too much oriented toward Hollywood," says panelist Willy Varela, an independent filmmaker. "It seemed they were trying to break into the industry rather than [supporting] an independent artistic vision that breaks those industry conventions." IFP/West sponsors a number of programs, including screenings, seminars, workshops, a newsletter, information services to independents, a weekly cable television series geared to independents, evenings with prominent professionals, and social events. The November calendar, for example, combined seminars on legal issues, marketing and distribution of independent features, and computer editing with a screening of Wim Wenders' *Paris, Texas* and an evening with advisory board member and producer David Puttnam (*Chariots of Fire, The Killing Fields*).

Panelists objected to the screening of films that are commercially distributed, such as *Paris, Texas* and John Sayles's *The Brother from Another Planet,* and questioned the composition of IFP's nine-member advisory board, which is composed of Jane Alsobrook (20th Century-Fox Classics), Wilbur Hobbs, Jr. (Crocker National Bank), independent producers David Puttnam and Jonathan Sanger, Michelle Satter (Sundance Institute), Charles Schreger (Triumph/Columbia Films), Daniel Selznick (Louis B. Mayer Foundation), Eric Weissmann (Weissmann, Wolff, Bergman, Coleman and Schulman), and Ken Wlaschin (Filmex). Mathis thinks the panel may be "suspicious of IFP's amicable relationship with the industry." As Wozniak pointed out in her letter to Killens, "Since this organization is based in Los Angeles, it would be supremely naive and counterproductive *not* to develop ties with those working 'within the system' who support us and align themselves with our goals. And we would be foolish not to make available to our members this important pool of expertise—whether a filmmaker chooses to work in, out, or in *and* out of the studio system is then up to the filmmaker."

One highly visible IFP/West program was the annual Independents' Day Seminar in conjunction with Filmex. Speakers at the July event included industry heavies like Mark Rosenberg, production chief at Warner Bros., and directors Joe Dante and Mark Rydell. "There's a tremendous need for an organization like IFP out here," says panelist Jacqueline Kain of the American Film Institute. "But the question is, are they doing seminars which are basically training for the system or are they doing things to get films made that would not otherwise get made?"

According to Larson, there is no possibility that CAC will reverse this year's decision. But the issue has again been raised: where does independence leave off and the industry begin? Undoubtedly those boundaries will shift with the aesthetic and economic currents of the times.

—Renee Tajima

COAST COALITION CONVENES

Over 100 Northern California independent producers turned out November 16 to hear Lawrence Sapadin, executive director of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, and to gather advice from local veterans of government funding battles. The occasion marked the first anniversary of the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers (ACIPTP), formed to act as California independents' research and advocacy arm. Included in its member organizations are the Bay Area Black Media Coalition, Bay Area Video Coalition, Cine Accion, East Bay Media Coalition, Film Arts Foundation, National Asian American Telecommunications Association, Media Alliance, Pacific [Islanders] Educational Network, and Video Free America.

Sapadin presented a thumbnail sketch of the 15-year history of federal support for public broadcasting and independents. Noting that President Reagan has declared public broadcasting *persona non grata,* he said, "Our job is to develop and put forth our own agenda for public television's future, and to mobilize the public to support it." He outlined strategies to achieve this "daunting" task, such as forming coalitions with others who share independents' concerns (including such natural constituencies as unions, gays, women, and minorities) and sharpening independents' lobbying skills. "Independents must realize that media advocacy is as much a part of our job as writing grant proposals, refining our technical skills or having lunch with potential investors," Sapadin said.

Following Sapadin's speech, California Newsreel's Larry Daressa gave an "insiders' view" of the government funding treadmill. "To understand what the Corporation for Public Broadcasting wants [to support financially] is to understand where it's at: attracting large prime time audiences in order to help public television woo corporate underwriting and individual members. If you [create] something esoteric, you're not going to get in." And, Daressa noted, "If you don't have some sort of track record, forget it. CPB does not view itself as a funder of experiments." Speaking from the audience, producer Carol Lawrence agreed: "CPB is not the place to start. But you can get together with others who do have the track record you need."

While CPB priorities are not hard and fast, Daressa said that, in conversations with CPB Program Fund director Ron Hull and CPB staff, the following areas won CPB's nod: American literature dramatizations; anything for children in the eight-to-12 age bracket; programs which "make people proud of their country and heritage"; performances or documentaries about popular culture; comedy. Daressa noted that international affairs programs are low on CPB's shopping list. "If you think that what

happened on November 6 affected those priorities, you're not far wrong," Daressa added.

Independent producers Skip Sweeney and Louise Lo then joined Daressa and Sapadin to field audience questions. Lo pointed out that among ACIPTP's principal goals is "holding CPB to its commitment to funding minority programming," especially important because the number of minority proposals has been dropping. "That's hardly surprising, given [CPB's] record of poor outreach and their abysmal funding percentages." Panelists stressed that if approached professionally (i.e., with a query letter first, then a follow-up phone call), CPB staff is willing to discuss potential proposals.

In organization and diversity, the evening demonstrated the development of ACIPTP itself. The familiar faces were there, but there was also a sprinkling of newcomers and healthy representation of women and minorities. Last year's meeting, though well-attended, was rambling and unfocused, with little in the way of tangible advice for newcomers or old hands. But both veterans and novices gave high ratings to this year's speakers for their conciseness and pragmatism. "We've spent a year investigating the pressures and problems facing the Program Fund and the stations," Daressa said afterwards. "Consequently, we were able to give a much clearer outline of present Program Fund priorities and identify concrete routes through which independents' work could become a more intrinsic part of public broadcasting."

—Fenton Johnson

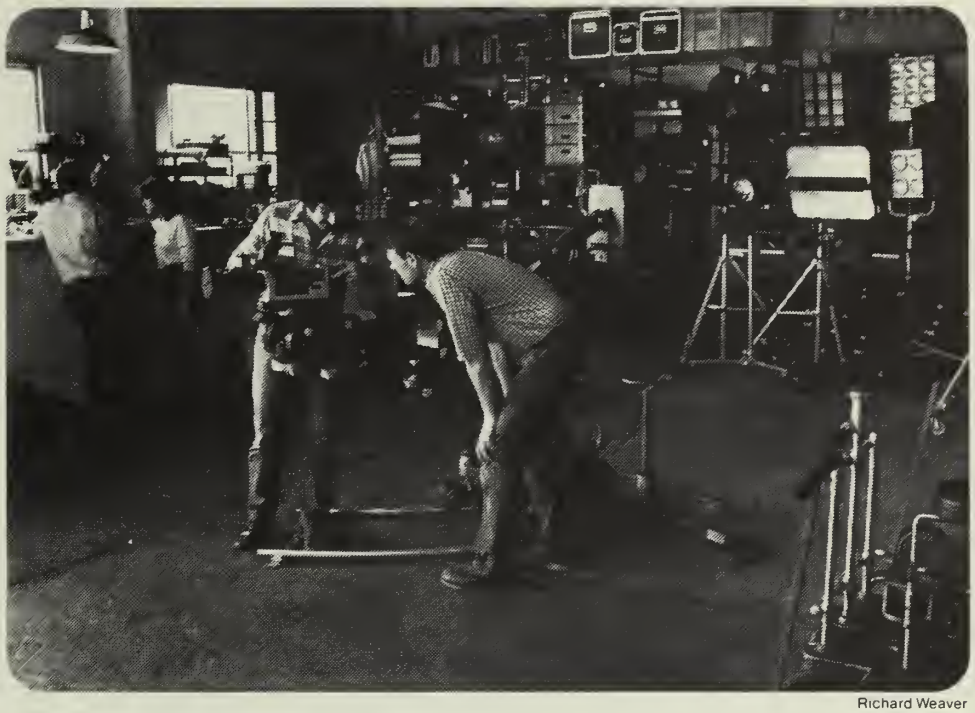
CIA REQUEST SPURS PRODUCERS' DEBATE

Last fall, the Central Intelligence Agency sent a purchase order to Icarus Films for approximately one dozen films and videotapes from the distributor's Central American Film Library, one of the largest of its kind in the United States. Most are documentaries critical of United States foreign policy—and CIA involvement— in the region.

What does it mean? There is no doubt that U.S. intelligence forces are taking an increasingly active interest in Central American affairs. And independents have been able to penetrate the region, documenting politically sensitive, controversial news material [see Susan Linfield, "To the Source in Latin America," *The Independent,* January/February]. Are these independent works becoming a source for intelligence gathering by the very agencies they criticize? And shouldn't producers expect that their works may well end up in the possession of intelligence organizations? Political film and videomakers have reacted strongly, sometimes passionately, to this issue.

Because of the political sensitivity involved, Icarus president Jonathan Miller informed each producer of the CIA's request, leaving the deci-

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sion of whether or not to sell to the film and videomakers themselves. Still, the Icarus case raises broader moral and political questions for independents.

The CIA's request was unusual. It was the first that Icarus had received from an intelligence agency; and, in a survey of distributors that handle media dealing with sensitive issues in American foreign policy—California Newsreel, the Cinema Guild, Downtown Community Television, Third World Newsreel, and (now-defunct) Tricontinental Films—no one I spoke to had ever encountered as hefty an order. Larry Daressa of California Newsreel says the group receives a rental order every August for *Willmar 8,* a documentary about a strike by female bank workers, to be shown at the agency for Federal Women's Week. Four years ago, DCTV was asked for a preview copy of the 1974 video *Cuba: The People.* A few distributors had received single copy orders.

Because of confidentiality with his clients, Miller declined to reveal the names of the requested films and tapes. However, from conversations with a number of producers listed in Icarus's catalogue who told me their work had been requested by the CIA, it appears that the agency was interested primarily in works on Nicaragua. According to Icarus staffer Dominique Bornhauser, a CIA purchasing officer requested Spanish-language versions of the films and tapes in a phone conversation.

Pam Tenneson of the CIA's purchasing department in Langley, Virginia told me that although film and video requests normally come through her office, she did not remember any order to Icarus. However, she stated that she is not able to comment on such matters in any case. Similarly, Harold Padgett, deputy chief of procurement would not comment on whether or not an order had been placed or on how the films and tapes could be used. He suggested, "I think you may have gotten some bum information" regarding the purchase order. Patty Volz of the agency's Media Affairs department said, "We obviously can't get into releasing our purchasing or acquisitions to the public. There may be variety of reasons why they were bought, but we couldn't release the information." She would neither confirm nor deny the purchase order.

If the CIA was reluctant to talk, producers and distributors had a lot to say about the possible scenarios for, and responses to, a CIA buy. The most immediate concern for producers is protecting the people appearing in their films or tapes from possible danger or political reprisal—a dilemma they face from the very beginning of production. "We thought that if there was an invasion of Nicaragua, we didn't want to endanger those people," said DeeDee Halleck, producer of *Waiting for the Invasion,* a portrait of North Americans living in Nicaragua, many of whom support the Sandinistas. Halleck directed Miller not to sell *Waiting* when it was requested by the CIA. Allan Siegel of Third World Newsreel, who is currently editing a documentary about the Nicaraguan Peace Fleet, said, "It's like giving the CIA a capsulized report on people." He added that Third World Newsreel would not sell to intelligence agencies under any circumstances.

Miller does not agree with Halleck's *Under Fire* scenario. "First off," he said, "the CIA knows everyone [North Americans] in Nicaragua already. They can find out [about] everyone who takes a plane [down to Nicaragua]. DeeDee's film was on national television. I don't think [hers] is a practical decision, it's a moral decision." He added, "I think [the CIA] is probably buying them [the films] for their background reports, like they buy books."

Wolf Tirado, a Managua-based videomaker whose *Thank God and the Revolution* and *The Pope: Pilgrim of Peace?* are handled by Icarus, did agree to sell tapes to the CIA. "Our position is, if the CIA wants to have our film, they probably got it four years ago," said Tirado. "I think you should look beyond the fact that the CIA is buying those films, and look at *why* they're buying. I don't think they're interested in using them against us in Nicaragua or against the people in the film. I think it's a way of putting presure on Icarus, to say, 'We know what you're doing, we're following you.'" Tirado pointed out, "Here in Nicaragua [we have] mines in the port, bombs falling on our heads and kids getting killed every day—and the CIA is doing it. Why should we worry about them buying Betamax copies?" Tirado said his main concern is that Icarus is protected here in the States and that it not suffer negative consequences by refusing to cooperate with the agency.

Halleck argues that the independent community should not cooperate with any form of intimidation. "People should understand that as repression gets harder—although they may think 'Oh, why not talk to the FBI or someone, they have nothing on me'—that's the way they accumulate information." She admits that an intelligence-gathering agency could get copies of films and tapes through a number of different channels, including taping off the air and purchase or rental through an assumed name. In addition, many of the people who appear in these films are already public figures or are known for their activities. John Greyson, co-producer of *Manzana por Manzana,* a videotape shot in Nicaragua which is distributed by Icarus, said, "In a practical sense, it may not make much difference whether or not we sell it. But politically there was no choice involved for us. It's such a bad precedent to sell to the CIA. It just comes down to a matter of collaboration."

Larry Daressa of California Newsreel, which produces and distributes social issue films, said the group would not unilaterally refuse to sell or rent films to intelligence agencies. "I think we would be very reluctant to become financially dependent on their business. My position is that the CIA and FBI do maintain quite legitimate educational programs but they also undertake subversive, covert activities. In the case of Central America, if there is sensitive footage, even if it was available off-air, then as a matter of principle, we wouldn't sell it." But Daressa thinks that ethical considerations do not end with direct sales. "I think that people who have scruples about selling to the CIA should have scruples about airing [their work] nationally."

Siegel asserts that producers should not be resigned to the fact that "they [intelligence agencies] can get it anyway." He points out that a Freedom of Information request can be filed to determine if an agency such as the CIA or FBI possesses a pirated copy of a film or tape. Third World Newsreel discovered evidence of such an acquisition when a writer researching the Black Panther Party filed for information from the FBI. A bureau memo on "Counterintelligence Program/Black-Nationalist Hate Groups/Racial Intelligence (Black Panther Party)," dated February 13, 1970, read, "The Bureau appreciates your suggestion in connection with the CBS television program *60 Minutes,* but believes the Black Panther Party film *Off the Pig* very adequate..." *Off the Pig* was distributed by Third World Newsreel, which had not sold a copy to the FBI. Attorney Marty Stolar points out that if a copy has been struck illegally by a government agency, it may be possible to bring a copyright infringement suit.

Because these films and tapes are part of a larger reality, created to influence public policy, the real test of their impact often lies in how and to whom they are distributed. When the material is highly sensitive, and when the subject matter is highly politicized, can and should the producers limit distribution from institutions whose interests they regard as opposite to their own? A striking theme in this discussion has been the consistent reference by independents to the CIA (and FBI) as—"them," a sort of evil empire to which a range of subversive activities are ascribed. But precisely because these agencies operate in an environment of secrecy, the dialogue becomes mired only in speculation based on the CIA's past track record or information acquired through the Freedom of Information Act. The most common initial response I received from producers and distributors as to the CIA's reason for ordering films and tapes was, "Well, it's obvious what they want them for." Everyone knows, but no one knows.

On location and in the cutting room, producers have debated the moral dilemma of exposing their sources to danger. Clearly, the conflict in Central America has been unprecedented in its coverage by independents—coverage which has been publicly shown early enough in the conflict to effect policy. Because independents have a close relationship with and remarkable access to their subjects (the networks often rely on in-

dependents for difficult-to-get material), independents find themselves in a position of vulnerability and responsibility. But since the morality of relationships with government agencies is nebulous, there is a tendency to react to governmental requests with hysteria or cynicism. To counter the secrecy, and to achieve informed moral choices, perhaps this issue should be taken to a public forum.. *—RT*

CRISIS TO CRISIS TO CRISIS

During a November 1984 seminar at Global Village, Gail Christian, director of news at PBS, questioned whether independents should continue to regard public television as an accessible broadcast outlet. "I don't think you should look at public television the way you looked at it five or 10 years ago," said Christian. She pointed out that PBS itself is an entity accountable to its member stations, and not the audience. "What are they [the stations] interested in? Prime time, big budget [programs], primarily series, and more glitz than we wanted in the past." She continued, "If you've got a fancy program on polar bears, I'll have an easier time selling it than a 30-minute documentary on El Salvador, which I have no indication that stations will air."

Christian's comments were part of a panel discussion on public television organized by the documentary center at PBS. Other panelists included producer St. Clair Bourne, Chris Fennimore, director of scheduling at WNET, Nancy Boggs of the Ford Foundation, and moderator John Reilly, founder of Global Village.

Christian identified the problem as one of presentation, not subject matter. She pointed out that stations do not look favorably on point-of-view journalism. The panelists sparred over the definition of balance and fairness in programs, which is certainly no new issue to independents. But the resistance to works regarded as "point-of-view" or simply controversial—the category into which many independents are placed—seems to be strengthening. "There is a very dangerous movement out there among the stations," Fennimore warned. "We saw it recently at the PBS Program Fair, where, in the evaluation of programs, you'd hear people say, "How'd you like that program on canoeing?' 'Oh, it's harmless enough. We'll take that one.'" Said Christian, "I think it's frustrating when you remember the days when we could say, 'OK, we're going to sit down and make America take a look at itself.'"

Bourne stressed that independents should "join [in] a united front with other progressive forces to fight the swing to the right." A renewal of the "make public TV public" days? Said Fennimore, "It's urgent that there be some countermovement, and a return to the original premise of public television."

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But there were few concrete strategies for opening doors to independent programs, or even for making carriage work for the few programs that get air time. From the audience, Carol Brandenburg, who was executive producer of the now-defunct *Matters of Life and Death* series, pointed out, "The basic problem you can't get around is that *series* are basic to public television. The difficulty now is how all these individual specials will trickle into the schedule." With *Matters of Life and Death* and *Crisis to Crisis* gone, there currently exists no national vehicle for carrying independent works in a series format. According to Fennimore, WNET is able to stockpile single programs and produce "generic" openings, such as the well-received *Intercom* documentary series. But most public television stations do not have the money to produce wrap-arounds, nor do they have the resources to take the heat for a controversial program.

Nancy Boggs was not optimistic about the response of the foundation community. She pointed out that foundations are basically conservative, and many are unfamiliar with media issues. "Somehow the independent community hasn't gotten together and done its groundwork," said Boggs, noting that the community works in a "piecemeal" manner. She added, "You'll have do some educating." *—RT*

NYSCA NAMES NEW MEDIA DIRECTOR

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson will replace John Giancola in late January as director of the Media Program at the New York State Council on the Arts. Giancola left the Council last summer to head a media progam at the University of Tampa.

Kim-Gibson was formerly a program officer in the Media Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, where she worked on numerous programs, including *Vietnam: A Television History, Hard Choices,* and *The Good Fight*. Before joining the Endowment, she was an associate professor of religious studies at Mount Holyoke College. Says Kim-Gibson, "I've always enjoyed working with independent producers—that's been a special joy for me. They are unafraid of taking risks, they are daring in their work, and they are sensitive to the plurality and diversity of society." *—RT*



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THE PROBLEMS OF PLURALISM: AFI VIDEO FESTIVAL

Sherry Millner and Ernest Larsen

Much of the considerable success of the fourth National Video Festival, sponsored by the American Film Institute in Los Angeles last September, derived from its mood of inclusiveness—an apparent desire on the part of its organizers not to be nationalist in their choices and definitely not to rely on "pure" video at the expense of television. Instead of a consistent and/or polemical focus on a few types of video, this festival demonstrated the variety of work being produced. At times risking a tendency toward the over-stuffed, the festival, at its best, generated continual spill-overs of animated discussions in the halls and verandas of AFI.

This density of exhibition—there were usually four programs beaming at the same moment—may itself be a polemic in favor of pluralism. Festivals are often pluralist in design, so it remains to be seen how much the choices of tapes and arrangement of programs tells us about the current varieties of video. For instance, the selection seemed to imply that this is less a period of individual "masterpieces" than of groupings, of political and/or artistic tendencies, of small communities for which video is only provisionally defined in its use. This observation may be conditioned by the inclusion of so much work made for television—work keyed to the receptivity of fairly broad audiences. Certainly the main (though not total) divergence within the festival was between this work and artists' video.

One of pluralism's seductions is that it's as roomy as a limousine. A critic with any particular axe to grind can be sure to find one lying around on the well-carpeted floor, and can, without undue embarrassment, ignore all the other axes lying there as well. But although this particular limousine of a festival was fueled by Sony Corporation underwriting, it actually tended to discourage the axe-wielder. There were at least 12 programs to discipline one's attention, providing a way to map the vast forest of over 150 tapes from 15 countries.

Questions of both form and content were carried from screening room to screening room, testing not only consciousness but some of the underlying assumptions of each program's more or less coherent view of video. This seemed to bear out festival director Jackie Kain's intentions: "We have organized the festival both vertically and horizontally... Juxtapositions, we hope, will not be perceived as random, but as purposeful—to draw out further the questions raised within the presentation." In response, we will try here to make a few cross-connections among the multitudinous presentations. We didn't see everything; what we did see we saw only once. However, even to our strained eyes a few patterns were visible: certain interesting distinctions between collective work and individually made tapes, between work relying on relatively high production values and work made with relatively inexpensive equipment.

In almost half the programs the terrain was public: among them, 1950s U.S. broadcast TV, Britain's Channel 4, advocacy television, and documentaries on Central America. Robert Rosen's presentation, "Television in Search of Itself: The 50s," featured clips—from a variety of early shows including Jack Benny and Ernie Kovacs—demonstrating an almost subversive liveliness and spontaneity, and a tropism for the unplanned, the disordered, and the outright mistaken. Rosen's catalogue critique of present-day television draws the contrast aptly:

> The omnipresence, repetition and predictability of broadcast television causes us to take its stylistic conventions largely for granted. The strategies used to structure sound, image, and narrative have become so familiar that they appear to be somehow "natural" to the medium. The full array of possibilities for an audio-visual language of television has been narrowed, over the course of time, to a commonly agreed-upon craft that we have learned to accept as self-evidently "correct."

Broadcast television's dismissal of the conceptually unlimited possibilities of live transmissions, in overwhelming favor of taped broadcast, has quite obviously drained the electronic juice out of what was, briefly, an exciting medium. An argument could be made for rawness as a deliberate strategy in video production, a strategy that could allow participation by viewers now pushed into the role of couch potatoes by slick high-tech production values and equally slick narrated entertainment.

It is both instructive and chilling to consider—in light of this festival's attempt to render the gaps in and the alternatives and resistances to "real" TV—the program entitled "Point Counterpoint," presented by Peter Broderick. Apart from excerpts from longer advocacy programs, this was a lightning-fast barrage of one-minute advocacy spots on dozens of issues—for and against a nuclear freeze, gay rights, abortion, gun control. Briskly clarified, with the aid of Broderick's comments, was the extent to which television no longer addresses us as political entities but as consumers, even when political persuasion is the aim. When consumerism swallows politics, politics literally disappears in favor of good digestion, oral hygiene, and regular professional care. The substance of issues, already too starkly stereotyped by the print media, is reduced to a toothsome nugget by TV adverts—and the willing electorate to a somnolent nullity. Suppose, neverthless, that we want to realistically respond to the enormous influence of these ads—would realism mean fighting video fire with video fire? It's got to be a losing fight, given the right wing's bottomless reserves of oil-saturated dough.

Britain's Channel 4, now only about two years old, represents a partial response to the "narrowness" of conventional television that Rosen documented and that political commercials exploit. Chartered to "appeal to tastes and interests not generally catered to" and to encourage experiment in form and content, Channel 4 is already doing some of its own political narrowing. Even so, the tapes shown here were far more adventurous than seems possible on U.S. public TV. All tapes are independently produced, with Channel 4 acting as their "publisher," in the words of curator John Wyver. Some of these tapes—the 155-minute *1980: A Piece by Pina Bausch,* for instance—are guaranteed to give a contact high to culture freaks. And an episode of *Visions Cinema,* directed by Chris Petit, explored the work of Wim Wenders with some of the devotion an acolyte might pay to the epistles of Saint Paul. Just as we were about to come down with creeping culture sickness, on came *Video Box.* A working-class woman with an interracial toddler in her lap delivers a one-minute rap on television's exploitation of racial stereotypes. Four teenagers cluster together and sing, a capella, a one-minute tune they've made up in response to a program they've seen the previous week. Ordinary people (we'd say "real people" but that's been pre-empted), not spokespeople, making their own claims without carnival mediations of announcer, or hokey program design, or more subtle intimidations of technology. In the end, what should be an obvious use of television—individual access for individual points of view—seems like a series of one-minute commercials for radical subjectivity. Here Kain's intentions are gratifyingly fulfilled: one can hardly fail to contrast *Video Box* with the political commercials.

Ian Breakwell's Continuous Diary is a quirky, intermittent series of programs with lengths suitable for each segment, not for standard time slots. While one tape shot in a local restaurant is little more than some wry thoughts on waiting for a meal (like Andy Rooney with grit), another piece concerned Breakwell's father, a factory worker hard hit by the failure of the British economy. The direct relationship of personal

history to social history is demonstrated visually—in a sometimes shorthand, sometimes rambling adherence to the diary form—replete with painful contradictions that may take a generation to comprehend, rather than a lesson to be learned at a sitting.

Pluralism tends to regard all social contradictions as equal contenders in the marketplace of ideas. Channel 4's position as impartial broker for the voices of the underrepresented typifies both the advantages and disadvantages of this position. Perhaps the strongest argument for the best of Channel 4's diverse programs is advanced by Raymond Williams in an interview that prefaces the festival catalogue. In speaking about TV coverage of the English miners strike, Williams says,

> There's something about the physical image of the working miners which separates them both from their officials and their employers; the great gain of television is that it enables you to see that difference. However, those opportunities are diminishing, and the quality of information is deteriorating because the media-event, arranged for spectacle and visual quality, tends to blot out the more significant but more everyday image, and spokesmen are much easier to get and much more willing to talk than the people who could speak up for themselves.

Here is a radically democratic concept that involves, in Williams's view, not just the authenticity of direct representation but also what he calls a necessity for a different kind of "finish" in video production—an abandonment of relatively high-cost production values. This would release money and energy for a diversity of cheaper, less studio-bound, and more immediate productions rooted in heterogeneous communities.

Some of these ideas resurfaced at a panel discussion, organized by *Jump Cut*'s Julianne Burton and Downtown Community Television's Karen Ranucci, "Nicaragua and El Salvador: Art and Activism, Urgency and Ethics." Augusto Tablado, supervisor of the video branch of Midinra, Nicaragua's national agrarian reform program, articulated a similarly politicized view of video production in his country: "We want to give the word back to the people—the right to speak denied the people by the Somoza government for 50 years." In his view, this applies not only to video production but to its distribution as well. Video's capacity for instant and repeatable playback, the pocket-size portability of tapes, and the common tendency in villages for collective reception (a TV set hung on a tree and powered by a gas generator) promote the conditions for dialogue instead of passive reception. This point has all the more force where generations of cultural represssion and censorship determine the historical situation.

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Robert Rosen discussed clips from '50s TV, including "Pete Hunter, Private Eye," in his presentation, "Television in Search of Itself," at the AFI Video Festival.

The overwhelming need for national self-expression does not mean that individual self-expression should be swamped in the process. Tablado showed a clip from *Que pasa con el papel higienico? (What's Happening with the Toilet Paper?*), a tape examining reasons for fouled-up distribution of this scarce, indispensable consumer item. One citizen after another offers differing arguments, successively criticizing paper factory employees, middlemen, and the government. This multiplication of viewpoints is not only democratic, but provides a sense of the many-sided complexity of one tissue (pun intended) of daily life.

As soon as a by-now dazed festival-goer moved from the presentations of collectively-produced work to the variety of art video programs (a good many grouped under the elastic rubric "From the Narrative"), the conventions of a second (art video) history came into play. Some these conventions have regrettably become somewhat lifeless. For instance, one must now be very patient or asleep to put up with much image-processed video. There was an almost universal recourse to slow motion—used whether or not there was any reason to analyze movement within the frame. It became difficult not to mock this suddenly fashionable, or perhaps just suddenly accessible, trick, which is hard to justify except as an unmistakable signature of artiness. Maybe it attests to a fascination with technical possibilities—gimme that high-tech religion! More importantly, such conformity tends to limit the range of expression instead of diversifying it.

At a suitably flakey music video panel discussion (attended, it appeared, by half of L.A.), the most pleasant moment came when an inane, soft-core, s&m ditty-video, directed by Beth B, was roundly booed. A separately presented but related category could be designated video *with* music. Aurally sumptuous, Kit Fitzerald's *Return of the Native* (music by Peter Gordon) organizes a musical soundtrack around the chapter titles of Thomas Hardy's novel, and a kind of coherence is maintained by the conceit. The visuals are technically polished but so spineless you could break your back trying to maintain some connection between the sunny pastorale of the Irish countryside and Hardy's gloomy determinist novel set in Dorset, England. The befuddled audience, at first struck dumb by this rather opulent production, could only stammer out an inquiry to Fitzgerald about the availability of the soundtrack album.

Dan Graham's *Rock My Religion,* also a music tape of sorts, looked as if it was edited with a coffee grinder. Watching this attempt to establish the nature of rock ecstasy via the Shaker religion, we kept rooting for Graham to get it together. However, ultra-cheap production should not mean glitches wider than your living room couch and a sound mix with less fidelity than a drive-in movie speaker. *Return of the Native* looks better and sounds better but lacks Graham's intellectual verve.

The British *Framed Youth: Revenge of the Teenage Perverts,* shot and edited by members of the Lesbian and Gay Youth Video Project, fairly bubbles over with the kids' determination to get their experiences—coming out, parental reactions, violence, love and sex—on tape without adult mediation. Their palpable conviction that transparent emotional honesty will somehow carry the day ends up doing just that. A sense of collective autobiography, which videotape in its accessibility can afford much more directly and immediately than film, so informs the sexual politics here that straight audiences would be hard put to ghettoize sexuality so glibly in the future.

Probably no tape at the festival was as warmly received as Gary Hill's *Why Do Things Get in a Muddle?,* a very clever reworking of a Gregory Bateson "metalogue." Hill painstakingly trained his actors to speak their lines in reverse. Thus, in reverse motion, the actors seem to be speaking their lines directly. One side effect of this Marx Brothers procedure is that the actors seem to speak English with a stage Swedish accent. The tape's blithe violation of the notion of time's irreversibility has several other such unexpected benefits which enrich a *mise-en-scene* that is also cheerfully dotty. Illogic and order begin to seem like allies. But the audience seemed more impressed by the technical *tour de force* than by its representation of Bateson's ideas. Does virtuousity in its alluring chinklessness preclude other than a surface fascination and work to prevent a dialogue with its audience instead of provoking one?

Der Riese (The Giant), by West German filmmaker Michael Klier, was perhaps the most unsettling experience of the festival. *Der Riese* resituated video directly in the area of its most widespread use: as surveillance. Instead of being watched by the omniscient video camera (wherever secreted: shopping mall, boat, hallway, sex shop, conning tower—choose your poison), we become the watchers, the aggressors, implicated for the duration of the experience in the universal proscription of free (because unmediated) behavior. As the camera steadily, starkly, inhumanly proceeds across a prospect of daily life, we feel we are at the scene of a crime; but it's as if the crime we witness is everyday life itself. This surveillance tape encourages, almost dictates, this conclusion without itself uttering a word of narration or voiceover. In one extraordinary section, shot in closeup, the features of one face after another are comically distorted by a police criminal identification machine as a metaphor for the physiognomy of social control.

The Mark Goodson Screening Room, where many U.S. premieres were screened, is sizable and luxurious. Six monitors are evenly spaced around it. Each viewer would automatically watch the closest monitor; from the front, the

audience looked more like six audiences watching six different tapes. This clash of sightlines produced a false impression of fragmentation. But the festival as a whole felt fragmented only in relation to the art tapes. Perhaps this is inevitable, but the lack of organized presentations and panel discussions contributed to the sense that discourse on this work is either unnecessary or so undeveloped as to be pointless. The first suggestion is absurd, and the second refuted by the relatively high level of articulation in every cluster encountered following the screenings. Isn't such response the main reason why we make the work in the first place?

Even the festival catalogue reflects the organizational lack—with art and/or narrative tapes receiving little if any contextual evaluation. This happens when pluralism, with its live-and-let-live bias, abdicates the political and aesthetic imperative to relate individuals' work to each other and to their audiences (in other words, to the larger collectivity) and to create a discourse that could provide corrective inspiration both to artist and audience. The absence of such discourse helps explain why so many tapes flounder in a formalist miasma.

This crucial objection aside, the fourth National Video Festival was not only large, ambitious, and involving—it worked. Every tape was shown twice; if you still missed something, arrangements could be made to screen it privately. The breadth of material was astonishing: substantial surveys of Japanese, Native American, and U.S. student video, a number of not even slightly Stalinist Eastern European tapes (including an episode of Miklos Jansco's *Faustus Faustus Faustus*), two episodes of *Boys from the Blackstuff,* a British social realist drama on unemployed workers, and, at a sidebar screening, a full roster of Barbara London's selection of narrative tapes. And on and on. In this case surfeit was bracing, bearing out Kain's intentions, and testifying to the enormous organizational resources of the festival staff.

Sherry Millner is a film and videomaker currently teaching at the California Institute of the Arts. Ernest Larsen is a fiction writer currently teaching at University of California/San Diego. Both are associate editors of Jump Cut.

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AIVF AT 10: A HISTORY



Debra Goldman

Defining the term "independent" is a treacherous task, and the formulas used are traditionally negative. An independent is a producer who is *not* affiliated with a corporation. An independent is someone who works *outside* the marketplace. An independent is a creator whose vision represents an *alternative* to mass entertainment. The term is also something of a misnomer. For whether raising money to shoot and edit, or finding outlets through which to reach a public, independents must come to terms with their dependence on social forces.

The creation of a place in our culture for media that is alternative without being marginal, imbued with values distinct from mass entertainment while still attracting an audience, is the paradoxical purpose of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, now in its tenth year. The organization's history, stretching from the last communal days of the counterculture to the hyperindividualism of Ronald Reagan's America, tells the story of a collective balancing act between these dual priorities. AIVF's evolving institutional character presents yet another paradox: the attempt to represent a working community whose only common denominator is the individualism of its members.

The unwitting godfather of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers was the United States Department of Labor which, in the early seventies, was funneling money through the Department of Education to retrain workers who had been displaced by the changing economy. John Culkin, director of New York University's Center for Understanding Media, successfully engineered a proposal designed to channel some of these dollars to independent media makers with the ostensible purpose of making them employable. Money in hand, it then became a matter of finding someone who could rally the New York community of independents, whose presence was palpable but whose dimensions were unknown.

Culkin's associate at the center, Bob Geller, and friend, producer Ted Timreck, knew just the guy: cameraman Ed Lynch. From a family of West Virginia preachers, Lynch was known among his friends for what Amalie Rothschild called his "evangelical" style. "They knew my predilection for talking people into things," Lynch explains. Timreck and Geller introduced Lynch to Culkin, who arranged for Lynch to receive a small stipend while he went out into the community to spread the word.

Culkin's original notion was the establishment of a foundation, along the organizational lines of the American Film Institute, but which would offer resources to the very independent media makers whom the AFI had thus far steadfastly ignored. Lynch said he "was perfectly happy to start any kind of organization, because I figure you start talking to people and you form the kind of organization that people want to form." He began contacting friends and found that "none of the people I talked to wanted any part of anything that they didn't have everything to say about." Lynch proved to be as good as his reputation, and, in early 1974, when the first public meeting was called, more than 100 people showed up to have their say.

From the first gathering, "it was high energy," founding board member Marc Weiss recalls. "Millions of things could happen. There was a sense that we were discovering each other and the feeling was, 'Let's find out what we can

create for each other.' Self-interest and social interest were happening at the same time." Large, voluble assemblies devoted to a collective cause were familiar turf to the group, many of whom had come of age in the sixties attending dozens of such meetings for a variety of political causes. Now they turned this activist energy to a cause of their own. "Somebody would say, 'Hey, we need blah-blah-blah,' and everybody would say, 'Okay, go ahead and organize it.'" Soon there were committees dedicated to cable, self-distribution, and membership, while dozens of individuals began organizing screenings and presentations on their own. Weiss remembers that "people were hungry" for exposure, feedback, and information.

All this spontaneous activity needed was a legal form. Lynch invited fellow filmmakers Martha Coolidge and Ed Emshwiller to join him as incorporators, and in July 1974 a meeting was called to discuss the by-laws and principles of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, drawing a large crowd. The board was then chosen: Lynch, Emshwiller, Coolidge, Weiss, Rothschild, Phil Messina, and Robert Bordiga. At Emshwiller's urging, Lynch, whose self-described "insanity" had sparked the whole enterprise, was voted president.

The activities of the newly official AIVF continued at a feverish pace. Not a Wednesday passed without a business meeting, a screening, or a presentation. The board convened weekly. With the exception of Lynch, everyone was a volunteer, and even Lynch's stipend in no way matched the 24-hour a day commitment he poured into the organization. Yet, according to Rothschild, the lack of money was more than compensated for by the fun, whether it was the post-board meeting game of pool at a nearby Tribeca restaurant or the Sunday screening parties at Ellen Hovde's loft, which evolved into a quasi-official AIVF activity.

Ed Lynch's peers unanimously credit his incendiary spirit as a major source of the upbeat, social energy of the early Association; they describe him as a "sparkplug" and "igniter." "Independent Cinema Lives!" proclaimed the title of a two-day festival organized by AIVF in late 1975, and Lynch strove to bring that celebratory exclamation point to all of AIVF's activities. Weiss said, "He really created a sense of excitement that as a group we were able to do things we were never able to do before, and that we should take every opportunity to celebrate ourselves."

"I've never disagreed that we had some of the hot stuff," commented Lynch, "but I would say it had more to do with the period of time, and everybody's energy and age." AIVF was exciting because it happened "in the context of the movement"—it was, in fact, one of the last institutional flowers of that movement. AIVF was not, however, a political organization, and as long as it was buoyed by the general momentum of the culture, it did not have to be. The luxury of the era, Lynch observed, was that "because you were part of a movement, you didn't have to worry [about] whether you were right or not." The politics of the group were reflected, not in an explicit political program, but in its organizational lifestyle, in the atmosphere of "activism, idealism, and communal sharing" which, in Rothschild's words, animated the Association's early members.

Nevertheless, a political identity clung to AIVF, so that despite its avowed openness to every kind of media maker, in practice it was dominated by social documentarians working in film. "In the sixties, the passion which brought people into film was art," said Emshwiller, one of the few experimental filmmakers to take an early active role. "In this period, it was politics." He attempted to draw his art film friends into the group, but "they just didn't feel like they belonged in a political organization." Video, in spite of its prominent place in the Association title, also suffered from a lack of attention. One problem was that many video documentarians in this period also worked in film and thought of themselves primarily as filmmakers, while the video artists felt the same estrangement from the organization as the film avant garde. "We welcomed any individual caring enough to take the initiative and put a project together. We wasted an awful lot of meeting time because of our concern to serve a whole panoply of interests," said Rothschild. "But ultimately it was the politically motivated people who had the most energy, passion, and commitment."

AIVF was only a few months old when events in Washington drew the organization into a political battle. The six-year-old American Film Institute was receiving a large percentage of the National Endowment for the Arts' media dollars; yet except for the grant-giving Independent Filmmaker Program, the Institute barely acknowledged the existence of independent media. In 1975, led by aging matinee idols like Gregory Peck, the AFI attempted to convince Congress to make the Institute a line item in the NEA budget, and therefore not subject to yearly review by the Endowment. If AFI succeeded, it would become the sole recipient of government media funds, an alarming prospect for hundreds of artists and dozens of incipient media institutions beyond the borders of Hollywood. Lynch began rallying the troops to lobby against the West Coast glitterati. In fact, the campaign was so absorbing that the board cautioned, "When getting in touch with people around the country, be sure to stress that AIVF is not a one-issue organization (anti-AFI)." The fight concluded in classic David-and-Goliath fashion: AFI lost its bid for guaranteed access to the arts budget.

That same year, United States copyright laws, which had stood on the books virtually unchanged for over a half-century, were being revised to reflect the realities of postwar technologies like photocopying and videotape. The National Education Association succeeded in writing into law a special exemption giving public schools the right to copy books, films, and tapes at no cost. Yet what seemed on its face to be a reasonable cost-saving measure for tax-supported educational institutions could, in fact, deprive producers and distributors of their livelihood. For many AIVF members, the educational market was a major source of income, and the organization joined forces with other audiovisual trade organizations to strike the measure from the bill. "We explained to legislators that the provision would destroy the private educational programming marketplace, and that the void created would have to be filled by government," said Rothschild, who vividly remembered two days of intense lobbying. Congress soon realized that what seemed like a public-spirited moneysaving measure had a hidden price tag of alarming proportions. The educators went down in defeat, and AIVF, barely a year old, now had two concrete victories, vindicating Lynch's "together we can do it" rhetoric.

Closer to home, the Association was busy organizing projects designed to assist media makers in their daily practice. The articulated purpose of the organization was to empower the membership through shared information and at the same time to create resources so that individuals could test their expressive powers on ever higher ground. For some, the latter meant moving from documentary into fiction features. As Lynch recalled, many people involved in documentary work did not choose "between three or four different film projects that they could make. It was just—this is it." There was a strong feeling that AIVF should help create different creative opportunities, said Lynch, who was becoming interested in making the organization a force in production. He and member Peter Barton organized the Screenwriters' Workshop The goal, according to Lynch, was to create a number of scripts which he himself hoped to produce. At the same time, member Alice Spivak began putting energy into a Directors' Workshop. "These workshops were very, very important." remarked Weiss, "because they were the first opportunity people had to get these kinds of skills."

Like all of AIVF's work at the time, these were volunteer efforts. Yet a continuing stream of concrete accomplishments kept the activist energy alive. Perhaps the most dramatic example was the creation of Independent Creative Artists and Producers (ICAP), which grew out of AIVF's cable committee; it was organized by Charles Levine, one of the few experimental filmmakers active in the membership. "Narrowcasting" was not yet a communications industry buzzword, but it was key to Levine's vision of cable's potential for independents. His hopeful notion was that somewhere on that 100-channel cable dial of the future was a slot for independent media. In the meantime, the committee, concentrating on more immediate opportunities, put feelers out to Home Box Office, the

then-fledgling pay movie channel with 10,000 subscribers, to test its interest in programming independent shorts. In March 1975, the cable committee reported to the board that "Robin Ahrold of Home Box Office wants to deal with an organization that gives him direct access to filmmakers. An exploratory meeting is suggested and then a group of filmmakers will form and make their own deal." HBO supplied a little start-up money, and ICAP began its life as an independent organization.

ICAP was a small part of a fairly grandiose plan. The next stage of what became known as the Cable Project was a collaboration with an interactive cable system in Columbus, Ohio. But such a daunting enterprise needed considerable financial backing, as did a variety of other AIVF projects. Moreover, it was clear that the active members, all with personal cash flow problems, could not continue pouring free labor into the organization indefinitely. Said Lynch, "We finally came back to Culkin's original concept of a foundation," which could solicit grant money. The result, the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, was established in January 1975 as a distinctly separate, non-membership organization, although its board was identical with AIVF's.

The Association's first year had yielded not one but three organizations: AIVF, FIVF, and ICAP. Yet even as the Association was multiplying its activities and accomplishments, the "spirit" of the community was shifting. The period of peak energy which the old guard remembers so fondly was short-lived; by the end of 1975, the days in which large crowds flocked to business meetings were over. In the spring of 1976, the board framed the upcoming general membership meeting with the title, "Is There a Need for AIVF?" In a list of suggested questions sent to the membership prior to the meeting, "energy" was the buzzword: "How can we structure AIVF to get more energy? What can we do better to get you and keep you involved and interested, and get some of your energy?"

Flagging activist commitment was not the problem of AIVF alone; it was endemic to the entire alternative movement. It was becoming evident that the organization could no longer float on the tide of a broad cultural consensus, as social activists of all stripes were returning to private life. The quiescence of the membership was one symptom. Another was the "sense of urgency being over, and a need to define the Association's role as a political force" that some members expressed to Coolidge. What would be the fate of the alternative vision of independent media makers without an alternative culture to support them?

During this same period a rift was developing between Lynch and the rest of the board. Lynch was labelled the "visionary" of AIVF—but his vision was increasingly at odds with the collective decision-making process by which the organization was run. Rothschild, while never doubting "Ed's purity of motives in organizing AIVF," said that the board grew more and more exasperated with with what she termed his "authoritarian, secretive" style, which she saw as the flip side of his evangelical fervor. Purity, however, was not a big concern for Lynch, who says he chafed under the obligation imposed by "the left, where everything had to be in the open." A certain amount of secret dealing, he believed, was indispensable to the exercise of power—power he wanted for the organization, and, it was thought by some, for himself. Lynch does not deny his secretiveness. Looking back on the Association's early years, he remarked half-facetiously, "We should have launched a coffee shop or restaurant. We never really admitted that, like any good subculture, we had to have a restaurant with a backroom." The backroom was Lynch's chosen turf.

Lynch believed that the shortest and most effective route to legitimacy for independents was through the production of great films, and he saw the Foundation as a vehicle to get the funds to make them happen. Within a few months of AFI's legislative defeat at the hands of AIVF, the Institute "unofficially" approached the Foundation, offering it control of the Independent Filmmaker Program. "They offered it as a kind of conciliatory gesture, because we sort of had them on the ropes," said Lynch. But there was strong sentiment on the board that administering such a grant program would be divisive. "We didn't want to be in the position of choosing one filmmaker over another," explained Rothschild.

Another opportunity to gain control of production dollars came in 1976, when the Ford Foundation and NEA announced that they were jointly making $500,000 available for the production of independent documentaries to be broadcast on public television. The right to the producing entity was up for grabs, and it was supposedly an open question whether the money would be administered from inside or outside the public television system.

The independent community was already well aware of how important public television was to its future in terms of dollars and exposure. In the late sixties and early seventies, a small number of producers had established relationships with PTV, but independents—who felt that as unaffiliated individuals, they *were* "the public"—wanted broader and more assured access to the system. Lynch saw control of the Ford/NEA money as a means toward these goals. "I wanted to broker that money for a new relationship between independents and [PTV] stations."

Lynch's conviction was fueled by AIVF's past experience with public television. This was the period in which stations like WNET had so much money that, Lynch said, "They were carpeting the walls. They were not receptive to independents. We always had to beg for meetings with them. They never really wanted to officially enter into conversations with us, because that would be like admitting that AIVF was a professional trade association to be dealt with." It was therefore crucial to keep these funds out of station hands.

The board remained resistant. Lynch, however, says he "took a very strong position. I said we must go after the money." He was determined to do so "whether it was done through the Association or not. So I think people felt a little angry and upset, because they thought I was blackmailing them." They did. Ultimately, said Rothschild, the board "gave in" to Lynch because they felt "there wasn't much of a chance that we'd get the money." They didn't. FIVF, Global Village, and Media Study/Buffalo lost out to WNET. The Independent Documentary Fund would be administered by a station within the system.



The first Indie Awards, presented in March 1976.

Lynch felt the loss of the documentary money was a "big, big, big missed opportunity" for public television and independents. Moreover, his relations with the board continued to be strained. "People said to me, 'Don't fool yourself. There's a big difference between being a bureaucrat and an organizer. An organizer is a different kind of animal, and you're finished with that phase.'" In 1977, he decided not to run for board president and was succeeded by Ting Barrow. Six months later, a short letter appeared in AIVF's mimeographed newsletter, in which Lynch announced that he would not be running for the board again. The note contained all the obligatory sentiments of continuing support for the organization and satisfaction that it was in "good hands." But Lynch could not refrain from taking a parting shot, adding cryptically, "I still believe in a *philosophically correct* in-

dependent movement." It was one last crack from the backroom.

Lynch's departure meant that the organization would have to confront the problem of its own administrative structure. At a fall 1976 meeting, the board considered creating an executive director who would be responsible for the organization's direction. But at the time, sentiment ran against the idea, and the board remained the locus of power. In the absence of a charismatic leader and in the face of declining membership involvement, the years 1977-78 marked the peak of the board's control over the organization.

The more far-reaching issue facing AIVF, however, was its political identity. The conflicts between Lynch and the board were, in fact, "political," representing two different concepts of power. Of what did real power consist? In whom should it be invested? How should it be used? The choices made by AIVF at the time were gestures back toward the sixties ideals of collective decision-making and organizational democracy which were the wellspring of the organization. The effect of those choices was to



reaffirm the "alternative" identity of independents, and reinforce the notion that they "stood for" something. But what did they stand for? A vague half-articulated—and perhaps inarticulable—amalgam of values like individualism and freedom of expression? Were they a band of cultural workers at war with the conventions of the media industry? Or with the whole of capitalism? Did they have to choose?

Since its earliest days, the Association had a vocal contingent of "politicos." But according to Ted Timreck, who remained involved with AIVF through his friendship with Lynch and served as a board member in the late seventies, they were not typical of the membership. Originally, he said, "The idea was an organization of artists. It didn't have to be political; certain people turned it into something political because they wanted that kind of struggle in their lives. But in the first meetings there was a feeling that this was a group of people on the verge of becoming great artists." Timreck claims that it was when the political types took the leadership role that the "organization lost its hopeful perspective."

This ongoing tension came to a dramatic head soon after Lynch stepped down from the presidency. Ting Barrow's election to the office might well have been considered a victory for the politicos. "He did a lot of free work for a lot of people," said Weiss, who with Barrow, had been a member of the political film group Mass Productions.

Like many filmmakers, Barrow depended on freelance jobs for hire to make ends meet. And when he was approached by the South African government to work on *Portfolio for Progress,* a film they were producing to promote South Africa's "business climate," he took it on. "He did it very naively," observed Weiss. "I really don't think he understood what the significance of it was."

Once word leaked out that Barrow was involved in the film, there were plenty of people ready to explain it to him. "People were shocked," Weiss recalled. AIVF received a letter from member Anne Boggan claiming that involvement in such a project was untenable for a president of AIVF. She wanted her letter published in the Association newsletter and requested that AIVF join the "New York Political Film Group" in a forum to discuss the issues raised. Many members were sympathetic to her reproach. According to Weiss, they believed that by "doing this work, Ting was betraying the founding principles of AIVF."

But at the the board meeting which considered Boggan's request, the majority of the board concluded that, in fact, Barrow had *not* betrayed the founding principles. For there was nothing in these principles regarding the kinds of films or tapes members and officers could or could not make. Longtime AIVF member DeeDee Halleck responded by pushing for a general membership meeting to discuss whether perhaps there should be.

The board agreed to participate in the forum, as well as publish Boggan's request. In a reply, they stated, "We feel it would be difficult and possibly dangerous to sit in judgment of one another's morality or artistry...AIVF restricts itself from either endorsing or condemning the contents or aesthetics of any member's work." Barrow, too, responded briefly: "My participation in the film was as a craftsman—as a cameraman and editor—not as a producer or director. I had no role in initiating the film." It was the sum total of his self-defense for the duration of the controversy, which dragged on for several months.

Barrow would not resign. A meeting to consider his status was highly polarized. As Weiss remembers it, when the matter finally came to a vote, Barrow was not thrown out, "but it was close, very close." In Halleck's version, there was one group of board and general members who were so hostile to what they saw as the forced politicization of AIVF that "they refused to even listen to the arguments. They took off for a bar across the street, and told their friends to come get them when it came time for a vote. And then they lost!" But at that point it was determined that there was not a quorum of members present, so Barrow stayed, ran again for the board later in the year, and was re-elected. But, according to Weiss, he was for the most part ostracized. In 1979 he left the organization, and eventually dropped out of the film scene altogether. Fellow board member Jane Morrison later speculated, "I don't think Ting could ever quite understand how all this could have happened to him."

The controversy continued into the spring, and the board postponed elections so that a meeting could be called to discuss AIVF's founding principles. Entitled "Economics and Principles," the meeting was described by Morrison as "almost a civil war. There were people who were uncomfortable with the attempt to legislate ethics, for there was a feeling that that can result in ridiculous laws, guidelines that are worse than the original problem."

There were not enough members at the meeting to amend the principles of the organization, but several "sense of the meeting" votes were taken. The results indicated the members were, in fact, ambivalent about creating ethical guidelines. Two motions, which passed easily, sought to amend the principles with language affirming the Association's support for "justice" in human relations "regardless of sex, religion, race, age, or class." Yet a third motion, supporting a media maker's right to "complete freedom of expression in the choice and execution of his/her professional work" lost by only one vote.

In a subsequent board meeting, a number of resolutions which became the official addenda to the principles were passed. They reflected the membership's desire to have it both ways. One "affirmed" AIVF's "respect for all," along the lines stated at the general membership meeting, while another "reaffirmed" freedom of expression. A third underlined the Association's commitment "to help reduce the membership's dependence on the kinds of sponsorship which encourage the compromise of personal values"—an issue that many felt was at the heart of the Barrow incident.

In the course of the furor over Barrow and the South African film, DeeDee Halleck's visibility in the organization rose dramatically. At the next board election, Halleck received almost 300 more votes than the second most popular candidate, and became board president. Morrison ascribed the victory to a sense among "the people mad at Ting" that Halleck would "renew the people's confidence in the moral fiber of the organization." And if there were people in the organization who were still ambivalent about AIVF's more explicit political stand, they found no sympathy for their viewpoint in Halleck, who said, "What does it mean to be independent? It means you don't work for a corporation. That you want to make something that comes from the heart, soul, aesthetic intuition, whatever. In this society, if you want to do that, you have to

be political. That *is* a political statement." In light of her margin of victory, she felt she had "a mandate to push the organization in the direction I wanted it to go."

One such direction was the reinforcement of AIVF's democratic tradition. "Know Your By-Laws!" trumpeted the first membership newsletter printed after Halleck's election. She insisted on letting the membership know the date and time of all board meetings in advance so they could attend if they wished. And she pushed for the publication of the Association's principles in the newsletter and in *The Independent,* which replaced the newsletter in 1978.

Yet at the same time that Halleck was shoring up the mechanisms of democracy, other forces were pulling the organization in the opposite direction, toward the creation of a centralized staff. The furor over *Portfolio for Progress* had produced a rupture in the tradition of the elected president as the organization's leader and spokesperson. This was not viewed as a necessarily negative development. "Everyone identified AIVF with Ed [Lynch]," said Morrison, "and we had to make the transition to a more solid administration, so that people would know that AIVF was not just Ed's idea." On a more practical level, the neutralization of Barrow inevitably threw more responsibility on the organization's single staffperson, Tom Lennon, who had served as administrative director since the fall of 1975.

The necessity of bringing some administrative order to the organization was exacerbated by two new long-term projects with which FIVF became involved, the Short Film Showcase (SFS) and the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA). Lennon described SFS as the program that "put us on the map." It was conceived by the NEA as a means of cultivating a theatrical audience for short films. The Endowment provided funds to enlarge from 16 to 35mm a group of shorts selected by two screening panels; the filmmakers were to receive an honorarium, and the films would be distributed to theatrical exhibitors for free. NEA wanted FIVF to administer the program, a responsibility which the organization readily accepted. "It was a feather in our cap," declared Lennon—as well as a dramatic shot in the arm financially, for the $100,000-plus of support money that NEA poured into the project more than doubled the AIVF/FIVF budget, as well as providing money for a full-time staffer.

Two additional people joined the staff in 1977, but even with this expansion, the CETA project, which also came on board that year, pushed the small administration to its limits. Through Lennon's connection with the Foundation for the Community of Artists, FIVF became involved in organizing around the issue of artists' access to CETA funds. Lennon said "it was quite a laugh" attempting to describe "artists" in terms that the Labor Department could comprehend, but they succeeded. In 1977, FIVF was awarded 14 CETA positions. Eleven slots would be devoted to the Media Works Film/Video Pool, which would work for local community groups, while three would be for the pursuit of independent projects. Yearly salaries of $10,000 were offered, which was $1,500 more than the CETA average.

If the Short Film Showcase represented a quantum leap in prestige and funding for the organization, the CETA project made AIVF the object of intense interest within the community. CETA was "momentous" for the organization, claimed Lennon, because it meant "we had goodies to give out." At the same time, it was "a test: could we as a community act civilly in parcelling out these goodies? There were a lot of hungry people out there." And in taking on CETA the organization had assumed the responsibility that it had heretofore resolutely avoided—picking and choosing among media makers. Mindful of the potential for controversy and divisiveness, an elaborate three-tier panel was constructed "in order to insure that there was no personal scratching of backs." One panel reviewed the 300 applications for the jobs, another screened applicants' work, and a third interviewed the 90 chosen candidates.

Despite all these precautions, the final decisions provoked a letter of protest from a group of AIVF members questioning the fairness of the process. The subsequent "scandal," which made the *SoHo News,* revolved around Chris Choy of Third World Newsreel, who had made it through the panels but was not among the final 14. Her exclusion, said Lillian Jimenez, who became Media Works administrator the following year, raised questions about the program's priorities. "After all, she was experienced, she was a woman, and she was Asian. Why didn't she get it?" Jimenez asked.

In fact, Third World media makers were not much of a force within the organization at the time. "When I first started becoming involved with AIVF," recalled Jimenez, "my friends in the Latino community said to me, 'What are you bothering with them for? That's a white boys' network. They don't have anything to do with us.'" Despite Lennon's insistence that the selection process was "rigorously fair," the protest did have an impact, for this controversy evolved simultaneously with the uproar over Barrow, and consciousness of racism within the organization reached a new high. Thus when selections were made for the 1979 CETA positions, there were several more minority film and videomakers among the chosen. Black camerawoman Jessie Maple, a member of the 1978 pool, was subsequently elected to the board. Choy is a current board member. And Jimenez has been board chair for the past three years.

But the pressure the CETA program placed on AIVF's small overworked staff obscured its long-term effects and its role in opening the organization to minority producers. "The selection process was a harrowing one for all," Lennon reported to the membership in a January 1978 newsletter. "The office was besieged, all but overrun; it shook with phone calls: distressed, irate, hopeful, disappointed." Administrative tasks included maintaining contacts with community organizations who were using the pool, keeping track of who was working on what, scrounging equipment. "There was no administrative money for this, and *we* were seen as a financial drain," claimed Jimenez. "Relations between the staff and the Media Works people were very bad. CETA became the stepchild of the organization." Lennon agreed that the complicated responsibilities of CETA were "too much, too soon" for AIVF, but added, "It made us grow up." It certainly made clear the need for a strong centralized administration.

In January 1978, the board formally resolved to create the position of executive director, a central administrator who would be responsible not only for the organization's day-to-day functioning, but actively involved in determining its development. A major break with AIVF's past, the decision's impact has been unfolding for five years and spans the tenure of two directors, producer Alan Jacobs and Lawrence Sapadin, a labor lawyer. Jacob's year-and-a-half at the job was spent turning what was an organization "very much of the sixties, still a very communal sort of operation" into a professional arts institution of the seventies; Sapadin has had the subsequent task of securing AIVF's continuing existence during the Reagan years.

Jacobs said that when he came on staff in 1978, the organization was "still very New York-oriented, and still very much dominated by documentarians." Jacobs wanted to "open the organization up." In 1978 and 1979, several groups outside the city approached AIVF with the notion of becoming regional chapters, but the board was uncertain both as to "how we can know the needs of communities outside New York" as well as how the small, overstretched staff would administer such chapters. The alternative was to directly seek individual members nationwide, so Jacobs organized a mailing to 10,000 names, a project that Sapadin inherited mid-stream in 1980. The response was impressive: membership stood at little over 700 when Jacobs left the organization; within six months of Sapadin taking the post, it reached almost 1400.

But the question remained: how could AIVF serve members beyond the immediate geographical reach of the New York office? Jacobs saw the answer in the Association newsletter. The first attempt to create a more ambitious publication that would represent the organization to a wider public occurred in 1975. "The only problem," wrote member Tom McDonough in his proposal for the publication he called *Deep Truth,* "is what are the running dogs of idealism who make up AIVF going to put in it?" The

"message" of *Deep Truth,* McDonough decided, would be that "while AIVF is a film-and-video thing, it is also a personal and political thing." In 1976, AIVF received a $4,000 grant for the publication, now more soberly titled *The Independent Gazette;* later in the year it debuted in a respectable 30-page tabloid format "a la *Rolling Stone,"* featuring interviews, reviews, a report on the emergent ICAP, an account of the first Indie Awards banquet, and, as McDonough had promised in his proposal, "mystic-philosophical ruminations in the Lynchian mode."

But the effort was too ambitious to sustain, the second issue never came out, and the organization returned to its modest mimeographed newsletter. By the time Jacobs became executive director, Bill Jones, a CETA-supported painter and photographer, had already been contracted to transform the newsletter into *The Independent.* The magazine, first published at the end of 1978, was a rather grim-looking 12-page booklet, its pages tinted paper bag brown, and only slightly distinguishable editorially from its newsletter predecessor. But Jacobs recognized the seed of a publication which could dramatically increase AIVF's usefulness to members nationwide. He created a separate funding category in the next grant proposal, and, with Jones, transformed the dull brown bulletin board into a "magazine," complete with logo and photographic cover.

Further development of *The Independent* fell to Sapadin, who had pledged to the board that he would make the magazine come out regularly every month, an elusive goal in the publication's first year. His intention was to change *The Independent* from a "bland communicator" into a publication "with an editorial thrust" that could "influence the field as well as respond to it." In early 1982, Sapadin hired Kathleen Hulser as editor. She instituted regular columns and diversified the feature coverage to reflect the disparate needs of a now widespread "community," while expanding to a more conventional magazine format. And she got the magazine out on time, every month. *The Independent* quickly became a central inducement to membership, especially for media makers outside New York. In 1984, under the editorship of Martha Gever, it was redesigned and increased its pages and advertising revenues.

AIVF hoped to not only expand quantitatively, but to diversify its activities as well. In 1979, Jacobs heard from a number of "old friends" who were trying to put together a support organization for feature filmmakers; he joined their meetings in Minneapolis and Los Angeles in an attempt to bring the incipient Independent Feature Project "into the fold" of AIVF. Jacobs offered the new project the support services of the Association, which became the collection point for the first IFP Market's films, as well as $1000 in financial assistance. His notion, as recorded in board meeting minutes, was that IFP "would be a project of our own—they would be included in our application for funds [although they] may have to raise funds for themselves."

Despite Jacobs' efforts, the IFP organizers became wary of close ties with the Association. "I think they felt their needs were so specific, in terms of the dollars needed for feature production and distribution, that their interests would be diluted by the concerns of the organization at large," Jacobs speculated. IFP reluctance sparked in the board a "paranoia that IFP would divorce us after using us. It was decided that they should come to us, that they would soon discover our usefulness to them." But the IFP soon set up separate headquarters in New York, and subsequently spawned a West Coast cousin with priorities substantially different from AIVF's.

The IFP was not the only project that sent Jacobs, in his words, "flying around the country" promoting AIVF as an institution of national importance. In 1978, Brian O'Doherty of the NEA Media Arts Program offered the Foundation, already administering the Short Film Showcase, another job. He conceived of a national organization which would bring together all the media arts centers in the country under one umbrella. NEA was offering $15,000 to be matched by the Rockefeller Foundation. Tom



Lennon, then top adminstrative staffer, organized a 1979 conference in Minnewaska, New York, at which media arts administrators would flesh out the concept. Implementation fell to Jacobs, who sat on the planning committee, despite his doubts about the purpose of such an entity. "I just couldn't see creating another organization which would put service institutions in competition with the individual artists they were supposed to serve for the pathetic few funding dollars that existed," he said. Nevertheless, it was hard to say no to the NEA and Rockefeller Foundation, and the group that gathered in Minnewaska decided that the concept was worth pursuing. A year later, the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers (NAMAC) was formally voted into existence at a second meeting in Boulder, Colorado. But the conflict of interest that Jacobs had foreseen soon surfaced. He returned to New York to report that the decision to exclude individual media makers from NAMAC had provoked a bitter fight and, with the support of the board, withdrew from taking any leadership role in the new organization

"Jacobs was a very one-to-one, very glad-hand kind of guy," said Lillian Jimenez. "He was tremendously important in creating a national profile for the organization." Yet his considerable social skills also caused some friction, particularly with those members of the board who were still less than enthusiastic about the executive director role. Weiss, one of the last of the old guard active on the board, was especially incensed when Jacobs joined the founding board of the Sundance Institute "without bothering to tell us."

The American Film Institute board was another of Jacobs' platforms that caused controversy. AIVF was first given a seat on the AFI board in 1977, another consequence of the legislative encounter of 1975. The position had been traditionally filled by the board president—first Barrow and later Halleck. When Jacobs became director, Halleck reluctantly ceded the seat to him in response to general board sentiment that the executive director should be AIVF's most visible spokesperson. While Barrow's and Halleck's reports to the membership of their experiences at AFI read like dispatches from a deluxe but distant planet, Jacobs began developing a working relationship with AFI's new director, Jean Firstenberg, who, he told the board, was "sympathetic" to independents' interests. Jacobs left AIVF in mid-1980, but did not resign his seat at AFI. For almost a year after Jacobs's departure, the AIVF board tried to install Sapadin in the AFI seat without success; when Jacobs at last left AFI, the AIVF seat vanished with him.

In some ways, AIVF's increasing national visibility and legitimacy masked its internal weaknesses. When Sapadin became director in late 1980, he was surprised to find that administratively "the organization was totally *ad hoc*—no structures, no allocation, no staff responsibility in certain areas." Over the previous three years, a staff of a half dozen (including CETA workers) had slowly but unsystematically coalesced. Over the next few years a process of staff specialization developed as the organization's programs and priorities emerged: the festival bureau, information services, screenings and seminars, membership, fiscal management and fundraising, *The Independent*'s expansion. By the end of 1984, what had begun 10 years before as volunteer activities had become the functions of a professional staff.

Flipping through the pages of the different versions of *The Independent,* one topic appears again and again: public television. It is fair to say that in the last five years, PTV has developed into a veritable obsession of the organization. In 1975, the board worried that AIVF might appear to be a one-issue, anti-AFI organization; in 1978 the anxiety was that it might seem like a one-issue, anti-PTV one. The event that

galvanized AIVF's preoccupation with public television was the creation of the second Carnegie Commission in 1977. The public television system was then a decade old; Carnegie II was to evaluate its accomplishments and deficiencies and make recommendations for its future.

The board's activist fervor was first kindled when AIVF learned that there was no independent representation on the commission. "Bill Moyers was their idea of an independent," Halleck observed. The Association insisted on a special hearing dedicated to the concerns of independent producers, as part of the series of meetings being held across the country. The resultant hearing, chaired by William McGill, then president of Columbia University and head of the commission, attracted 160 producers ready to testify. To add scope to AIVF's investigation into the state of independent-PTV relations, board member Jeff Byrd created a survey which queried the membership on their past experiences with the system.

Public television was due to come up for Congressional review the next year and the Carnegie Commission testimony was expected to loom large in the final legislative result. AIVF, now armed with its own Carnegie testimony, gathered its resources for a trip to Washington. "There were about six of us in the car," remembered Halleck. "We had the number of some people who were going to put us up, but when we called no one was home and we didn't know their address." Moreover, they had learned that all 50 copies of testimony which they had brought for both the communications subcommittee and the press had to be deposited with Congress. So the group spent the evening before their Congressional debut "with no place to go, riding around Washington, looking for an open copy shop."

But the substance of their lobbying testimony compensated for what they lacked as professional lobbyists. While CPB president Robben Fleming "treated us like college students," as AIVF staffer Robin Weber said, the Congressional aides with whom the lobby made contact listened closely. Halleck, Ralph Arlyck, and Joan Shigekawa were among those who testified, and the carefully cultivated aides "loved our testimony," declared Halleck. "We were taken very seriously as an authentic voice, and invited to testify again."

The result of their testimony was that the new legislation contained a stipulation that a "substantial" portion of public television programming funds be devoted to independently produced programs. The subsequent Carnegie II report, *A Public Trust,* forcefully advocated an increased role for independents and fueled AIVF's sense of victory. But not all skepticism was diffused. The legislation talked about "substantial" funding for independents, but how much was substantial, and who decided? And while AIVF supported the "spirit and intent" of Carnegie II, a statement issued in response to its publication also warned that "Carnegie I had a lot of beautiful language, but its recommendations were not fully implemented."

Every issue of *The Independent* reported new developments in the CPB effort to realize this new mandate—as well as documenting its reluctance to cede any meaningful control over the programming process. Independents' sense of righteousness was reinforced by a December 1979 letter to Fleming from Rep. Henry Waxman (D–Cal.) which stated that "substantial" meant that 50% of program funds should go to independents. AIVF brought CPB officials face to face with members in a number of forums to which CPB responded with a mixture of placation and resentment. The law said that CPB had to work with independents, but the corporation conceived of the relationship not as part of a "public trust" invested in them, but as an unwelcome intrusion on their institutional perogatives. There were angry exchanges between CPB and producers over questions surrounding the panel process, editorial control, and the hoariest issue of all: who is an "independent"? Producer Peter Adair expressed the sentiments of many members when he admitted, "I'm torn between seeing you CPB people as the enemy or as the only friends I have."

Jacobs resigned at the very time that CPB formally announced proposed guidelines for the "Independent Anthology," its first program under the independent mandate; it was left to Sapadin to monitor CPB's compliance with the legislation. His baptism occurred his first day in office with a call from Ralph Arlyck, one of 24 producers who had just received a contract for the new series. Sapadin said he learned that "the contract was an incredible dog" which required producers to sign over exclusive broadcast rights to their programs for a full three years—whether they were aired or not. "My immediate response was, 'Let's get together and do something about it—collective action,'" Sapadin said. Sapadin, Arlyck, and members of the board advocacy committee rounded up 17 of the 24 producers, each willling to pay $75 toward legal fees. The resulting negotiations with CPB led to major adjustments in the contract, a "huge victory," Sapadin asserted, "because no independents had ever negotiated with CPB as a group before."

Not all subsequent battles with CPB would prove so fruitful. Sapadin had spent no more than a month at his post when Ronald Reagan took up his in Washington. By the time the "Independent Anthology" series, broadcast as *Matters of Life and Death,* was aired, public television was facing drastic reductions in its federal subsidy. Within months, 1983 funds shrank from $220-million to $130-million. The "independent mandate" was actualized not in the atmosphere of increasing diversity and financial security prescribed by Carnegie II, but in a time of shrinking governmental support. As money grew tighter, CPB, which had never willingly embraced its relationship with independents, began to close ranks.



AIVF president Robert Richter testifies before the

Courtesy "Current"

In 1982, CPB's Program Fund announced the formation of various station consortia devoted to the production of dramas, documentaries, children's and arts programming, to which a major portion of the fund would be committed. "The net result," wrote Sapadin in an Advocacy Committee report to the membership, "is that the most open and democratic procedures which were designed to make the CPB Fund a fair and efficient point of access" were wiped out, except for *Matters of Life and Death,* "CPB's sop to the community of smaller independent producers." CPB still claimed that 40% of its funds were going to independents, but that figure included a significant portion of the $4.5 million budget of *Frontline,* a documentary series produced by WGBH which had been severely criticized for what many considered its closed-door policy toward independents. Four years after the passage of the 1978 law, independents were fighting for territory they thought had already been won.

Obsession was enflamed by frustration. For several months, AIVF considered a lawsuit against CPB, only to drop the idea in light of the huge expense and poor prospects for success. The Association was forced to take a less dramatic tack in pressing its demands. Its most recent strategy has been the formation of a na-



oard, 1983.

tionwide coalition of independent producers, a group that began regularly scheduled meetings with CPB in 1984. Thus far the meetings have yielded the declassification of *Frontline* as an "independent" project and some democratizing concessions in regard to the panel process. But without question, the funds and opportunities at issue in no way correspond to the promise of the 1978 legislation.

Is the current state of independent production and public television a half-full or half-empty glass? "We may not have gotten everything, but we're a lot better off than we'd be without [PTV]," asserted Halleck. Yet the struggle has taken its toll in frustration. "We knew we'd have to fight for the CPB money," said Jane Morrison, who was on the board during this period. "But the public television system is structured so you can't ever pin anyone down and hold them accountable. Ultimately, I was burned out by the endless struggle."

In the past, CPB officials have accused AIVF of being too strident in its dealings with PTV, an argument Sapadin rejects. "There are people out there who are not your friends. You have to fight to get what you want." He also defended the organization's dogged pressure on CPB. "In the case of public TV , there is a statute that says we have rights. It seems to me that you should protect what's yours." And in what is perhaps an ironic footnote to the Lynch-board dispute over the Ford/NEA documentary funds, as recently as December 1982, Sapadin suggested that the Association push for the creation of an "Office of Independent Video and Film Production for Public Television," which would administer production funds for independents outside the public television system.

In its first decade, AIVF has shown beyond a doubt that it is, in Jane Morrison's words, "not just Ed Lynch's idea." But it has, in fact, become a very different idea. The erstwhile "film-and-video thing" that was the early AIVF is today a sophisticated membership trade organization, a practiced lobbying force, the member of several *ad hoc* producer and telecommunications coalitions, and the publisher of a magazine with a growing newsstand distribution.

AIVF still refers to its membership as a "community," but the label is more rhetorical than descriptive. It is too large (members now number close to 3,000), too geographically diverse, and too differentiated in terms of skills, experience, interests, and personal histories. Its roster includes producers of feature films and public access shows, documentarians and video artists; while this variety is not new, the range of ambitions, track records, and working budgets is. In 1975, AIVF was a relatively homogenous group of documentarians; in 1985, a member seeking assistance is almost as likely to be looking for information on limited partnerships designed to raise a quarter of a million dollars as one looking for a cheap postproduction house in which to edit a low-budget social issue videotape.

Sapadin's response to this variety is the policy of "something for everyone." The organization, he believes, should provide the widest possible range of services, so independents of every stripe have something to gain from belonging. But this "united in diversity" approach is more a membership and advocacy strategy than the members' own expression of any common identity.

One casualty of AIVF's maturation is the decline in membership activism. The services that members once created for themselves are now the responsibility of a paid staff. Even the board, which once met weekly to decide all organizational matters, now convenes only quarterly, because of its bi-coastal makeup. Both Jacobs and Sapadin see this shift as inevitable, part of an organizational life cycle that can be traced in every institution. Sapadin admits that "some of the personal involvement" is lost in the process, but the trade-off is a gain in "stability and impact on a broader scale. The organization will never go back to what it was initially, but if it develops to the stage where there are chapters—regional structures on a decentralized basis—you've essentially created miniatures of the original organization."

Finally, the loosely defined, common ideal of free imagination which drew the crowds to Ed Lynch's loft has been largely supplanted by a more explicitly political agenda. But the agenda itself has changed—from countercultural subversion to institutional, mainstream politics. In what is perhaps the greatest irony of AIVF's history, the further the organization has drifted from its activist subculture roots, the more professionally political it has become. The multiplication of threats to the funding framework upon which the growth of independent media has depended—cuts in the NEA budget, conservative consolidation of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Federal Communications Commission's sell-out of the public interest and parallel developments at CPB—have required the broadening and professionalization of the organization's advocacy.

It is an open question as to whether the politics of AIVF today reflect only the priorities of the staff and board—still dominated by social documentarians—or of the general membership. "I've heard complaints: 'Too much Third World stuff in *The Independent*,'" Sapadin reports. But he argues, "That's where it's happening. The survival of minority production is essential to the survival of independent production." Sapadin says the cross-over producers who can command six-figure budgets and edge their way into theatrical exhibition "are less secure than they think. Their ability to cross over is not a given. It comes from their continuing ability to get funding from public sources." It is that fight to preserve access to public funds, which in turn provides producers with creative insulation from the demands of the marketplace, that, in Sapadin's view, dictates AIVF's political profile.

The prospects for public funding for independent media have never been more bleak. The entire rationale for public support for the arts—that there are certain matters on which the marketplace should not have the last word—is increasingly regarded as heretical. Four more years of hostility toward the public sector ultimately may mean, Sapadin says, "that independent production will be for those who can self-fund or those who, through their willingness to exist on a subsistence level, can self-capitalize": the very conditions which gave rise to AIVF in the first place. Sapadin is well aware that "AIVF will not solve the independent's problems by being better organized of by having a more active membership. None of our little administrative problems are going to solve the problems of independent production separate from the social and political context of the time." Even as the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers celebrates its first decade of growth, institutional stability, and national visibility, troubled questions about the independent movement intrude on the party like uninvited guests: No one knows whether this tenth anniversay is a landmark in the upward trajectory of independent media, or a circular movement coming to rest.

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LATINO MEDIA DEMO BEGINS

Renee E. Tajima

The world crisis in democracy has produced yet another pilgrimage by independent film and videomakers and the media center community. This time the hot spots are Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and their environs. And so we brush up on our Spanish to shoot, teach, and demonstrate our solidarity with the people of Central America. The irony is that we may trek thousands of miles bringing our valuable hardware and skills; but are the Latino communities *in* the United States being served? And shouldn't our awareness of the depth and scope of productions coming out of Lincoln Park and East Harlem at least match those in Managua?

When I brought this issue up at the annual conference of the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers (NAMAC) last October, my criticism was not directed at those who are doing important and sincere work in Central America, but rather at those who hurry in the direction of the latest political crisis yet at the same time wouldn't set foot in neighborhoods in their own cities or express much concern about Third World media in this country. The recent interest in Central America has resulted in a wider access and exposure to Latin American film and video than ever before. However, the stories of Latino people here, and the opportunities for Latino independents who want to tell those stories, remain neglected.

As we gathered at Appalshop—in an Appalachian town that is suffering another round of lay-offs in the coal mines—some of us asked, "Aren't these the kinds of constituencies that the MACs are supposed to address?" In a self-conscious effort to compensate for last year's classy, maybe too classy, gathering at the Walker Arts Center, NAMAC devoted this year's conference to the topic of media and democracy. But an alliance is only the sum of its parts. As we listened to MIT computer artist Jennifer Hall announce that video is archaic, followed by an exhibition of her programmed creations inspired on-line by her chest cavity pulsating against a touch-sensitive terminal, and as we were introduced to the concept of "off-Hollywood" by an American Film Institute/Independent Feature Project/Sundance Institute panel, titled "Whose Vision of America?," we wondered if the field has an identity problem.

One refreshing aspect of the NAMAC conference was the presence of individuals, such as Elizabeth Perez Luna of Toucan Productions in Philadelphia, and Eduardo Diaz of the Guadalupe Cultural Center in San Antonio, who have not been a part of the MAC inner circle, but nevertheless have been developing community-directed independent media services in their own cities. They, like many other Latino producers and media activists, work in a milieu where alternative media functions as a democratic tool asserting the right to information (and in one's own language) and the right of self-determination over the record of one's culture, history, and experience. Two other examples of Latino organizations with similar goals not represented at the conference are Bilingual Education Services (BES), which produces programming that deals with the importance of now-controversial bilingual education, and the Latino Consortium, which addresses the paucity of Latino television programming for general audiences by packaging and distributing programs to public television. Across the country the activity of individual Latino producers and small production groups has steadily grown. Perhaps the best way to gauge the social temperature of the MAC world, then, is to look at what's happening in the field.

How has the MAC movement, represented by NAMAC, affected the Latino community, or how has the Latino community contributed to the field? First, let's take a look at the relationship between Third World media and white-controlled MACs—which has ranged from neglect to tokenism to the integration of work and purpose. Independent producer Lourdes Portillo cites the Film Arts Foundation as an example of the ideal: "You don't have to push FAF to do things," says Portillo. "There's a very close link between the directors and the Black, Latino, and Asian producers. Whenever there's a need, you don't need to push them, they just go ahead and implement it."

On the other end of the spectrum is neglect, or even hostility. "Over all, Latinos aren't being served by the MAC field," says Luis Ruiz, a former board member of NAMAC who has argued for more minority outreach in the organization, "and there's no consciousness about it, which is worse." As Diaz sat through the southern regional caucus at the conference, he was irked to hear someone ask, "What do we do about the minority problem?" During its four-year lifespan NAMAC has been plagued by demands for Third World representation and/or by the inability of the organization to involve all sectors of its constituency—depending on your point of view. To a degree, minority media people have been viewed as outsiders—a special interest group that must be accommodated to satisfy an obligatory guilt complex left over from the '60s, or to avoid embarrassing boycotts. Last year Asian Americans refused to attend the Walker conference after being left off virtually every panel. Ruiz also boycotted the '83 conference because of the lack of minorities on panels, despite his discussions with the organizers prior to the event. To the extent that minority relations are defined by tokenism, what is perceived as "the minority problem" will continue to besiege the field.

The real problem, however, may lie in the failure to accept minorities on equal footing or, better, as assets to the field. At the Appalshop conference, New York State Council on the Arts Film Program director B. Ruby Rich remarked that she had not seen so much energy in the organization in a long time, and the greater Third World presence at the conference contributed to that new energy. More than one observer has noted that many minorities in the media field have a wealth of political organizing experience, along with the clarity of purpose that comes with that experience. One theme at the NAMAC conference was "building new alliances" with natural constituencies. Minority producers have organized that way for years. For instance, Mabel Haddock, executive director of the National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC), has engaged in extensive outreach to Black churches—traditional activists in promoting positive images of Blacks in the media—to garner support for the organization's public television distribution efforts. (Like the Latino Consortium, the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium, and the National Asian American Telecommunications Association, NBPC packages, distributes, and promotes minority programming to the Public Broadcasting System.)



Cine Festival in San Antonio screened Eduardo Maldonado's "Laguna de dos Tiempos." (Courtesy Cine Festival)

CRACY
AT HOME



Rick Tejada-Flores's "Low 'N Slow: The Art of Lowriding," shown at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center.

Courtesy Filmmaker



"Los Lobos . . . And a Time for Dance" was shown on "Presente" by the Latino Consortium.

Photo: Brad Branson

In a sense, the greater minority population in this country is a natural constituency of the MAC field. But how are the minority and white media communities to achieve that ideal of integration of work and purpose? Last year, Lillian Jimenez wrote that she was at one time heavily criticized for working with AIVF, long seen by minorities as a "monolithic white male structure that they had to break into" ["First Steps to Developing Latino Alternatives," *The Independent,* July/August 1983]. People told her, "We need to set up our own structures; we need to work by ourselves; we don't need white folks; we need to break that dependency." Jimenez pointed out that minorities have to approach the situation tactically and be willing to struggle. "We need to look at *how* we can work with white people, especially people who are outside of our class, educating *them* and being educated also." I will take that idea one step further, adding that minorities need to work with whites from a position of internal strength.

The existence of minority-controlled MACs and other organizations are a way of achieving that strength. Most people agree that local Latino organizations and centers are necessary. "They know how to package Latino aesthetics and concerns, and they know the particularities of Latino media artists," says Jimenez. However, there are differing views on the prospects of creating a national entity. Jimenez believes that there is a need for a national center to provide services and communications and to bridge the schism between producers on the East and West Coasts. She cites the ties that resulted from the Alternative Cinema Conference in 1979, where many Latino producers met for the first time. According to Diaz, there were earlier efforts to establish a National Latino Media Coalition in the 1970s. "People were starting to come out and do stuff. It was the highlight of the civil rights movement for access and employment, and there was an effort to organize the producers. For the first time, Puerto Rican and Chicano producers came together." But that coalition did not last. Diaz blames the lack of funding and losses incurred when the WNET-produced program *Realizades* folded after the Corporation for Public Broadcasting curtailed its funding;

the *Realizades* group had spearheaded the coalition. But Ruiz also points out that the diversity of coalition members created difficulties, and this would present an obstacle to further organizing efforts. "You have to have very strong local groups," he observes. "With that there's a lot of mistrust. There are three distinct Hispanic groups in this country: Chicano, Puerto Rican, and Cuban. It would be better if they were taking care of local needs and getting together nationally on bigger things." Jimenez is in the process of organizing a conference of Latino producers where these issues can be discussed.

Indeed, most of the organizing process has been made on a local level. Cine Accion, which Portillo helped found in 1980, serves the San Francisco independent community, particularly Latinos and other minorities. It is a multi-service center, under the direction of Roberto Echevarria, that sponsors screenings, meetings, a skills bank, and a newsletter inserted in FAF's publication *Release Print*. (FAF's executive director Gail Silva is on the board.) The group has recently received a grant to produce a four-part 30-minute cable showcase of works by Latino producers.

Cine Accion works closely with other local arts and media groups, according to administrative assistant Clara Ines, the only paid staffperson. They have recently organized Imagenes, a project with Cultural and Educational Media and the Theatre Artaud Film Committee which will showcase Latin American cinema. They are also planning a Latin American Film Festival, which may be presented as an official component of the San Francisco International Film Festival. Cine Accion has long served as a link with Latin American filmmakers. "When they come to the San Francisco International Film Festival, we host events like cocktail parties and introduce them to the community," explained Ines, "because otherwise they would only get to know the film community. We have things in El Barrio; for example, the Mission Cultural Center will do a presentation or a press conference." presentation or a press conference."

Latino media people have been active in forging these intercontinental connections long before Latin America became a popular issue. "We feel a very close link with Latin American filmmakers," said Portillo. "There's no difference between us here and in Latin America." Los Angeles-based Ruiz and his partner Jesus Trevino see Chicano filmmakers as being part of El Nuevo Cine Latino Americano [the New Latin American Cinema movement], and have cooperated with the Mexican film community in productions [see "Chicano-Mexican Connection Grows," *The Independent,* June 1984]. Other visible efforts have included exhibition exchanges, such as Cine Festival's program of Cuban films last summer and the Chicano cinema retrospectives in Havana, Benalmadena, Spain, and one being planned by BES for broadcast on Mexican television. Given this experi-

Another Cine Festival presentation was "Cronicas Caribe."



Courtesy Cine Festival

NAMAC'S CRITICAL CONDITION

Judging from the National Alliance of Media Arts Center's annual conference in late October, the organization is in deep trouble. The vexing problems, articulated at an all-day board and membership meeting, can be variously pinpointed: financial instability, lack of communication, murky decision-making processes, unresponsiveness to constituents' interests, lack of common purpose—in sum, organizational disarray and a great deal of discontent. To those present at the genial Appalshop conference, this may seem a downbeat, overly harsh evaluation of NAMAC's current condition; but despite good will and the alliance's resolve to persevere, no practical cures for NAMAC's general malaise were identified, not to mention implemented.

There were a few decisions reached during the conference deliberations. Three are significant: restructuring of the board of directors, election of two new co-chairs for the organization, and the resignation of the board's sole minority member present. All decisions were confined to the board, although the first two were subjects of discussion at the membership meeting. A "streamlined" board was proposed by Melinda Ward, head of NAMAC's long-range planning committee and director of media at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis. Ward's reasoning was based on the failure of NAMAC's 16-member board to meet even once during the past year, which she attributed to its unwieldy numbers. She recommended a 12-member body instead. In addition, Ward's board design included provisions for six appointed members, the remaining six to be elected at-large by the membership from a roster of candidates compiled by a board committee. As someone remarked at the membership meeting, under this plan the composition of NAMAC's governing body will be internally controlled. Board member Jose Luis Ruiz reminded the assembled membership that past board appointments have been intended to achieve geographic and ethnic balance, but Ruiz's subsequent resignation from the board raises questions about the organization's ability to serve Third World constitutents. Also, Ward's proposal simply advocated that those sitting on the board be individuals "with national influence and fundraising ability"; the by-

ence, Ruiz finds its strange that other MACs, now showing a deep interest in similar exchanges, have not proposed cooperative efforts with Latino media people.

Diaz confirms the growing interest in Latino film and video by Spanish-speaking countries, but the reception at home has proved problematic. Ruiz echoes Portillo's concern that independent Latino producers often fall between the programming cracks, unable to find a telecast outlet. "We're not in SIN, we're not in CPB, we're right in-between," says Portillo. SIN (Spanish International Network) is a national Spanish language system that largely acquires programming from abroad—a primary vehicle for major advertisers who are looking for a Spanish-language market. "In public television, we have a sizeable potential audience na-

laws contain no language ensuring balance. And in Ward's view, as she explained to the membership, "It doesn't matter whether you elect or appoint the board." Although there was dissension on this issue, the membership was never polled, and the board adopted the plan at its meeting the next morning.

At that meeting Ward and Rick Weise, director of Film in the Cities in Minneapolis, were chosen to co-chair the alliance. Weise has been NAMAC's treasurer and the problem of NAMAC's solvency may be acknowledged in this choice. Since the last conference in 1983, NAMAC established a national office, hired an executive director (Wanda Bershen) and an assistant, and then, last July, closed the office and laid off the staff. The reason given by Ron Green, NAMAC chair for the past two years, was a "cash flow problem." At the board meeting Weise reported on NAMAC's current balance sheet and projected 1985 budget. The math involved in figuring the financial state of the organization was questioned, however, and the ensuing discussion degenerated into a verbal battle over debt repayment. From that debate and Weise's report to the membership, it seems fair to conclude that a balanced budget for NAMAC hinges on successful fundraising during the last months of 1984. Otherwise, the cash flow problem could become a true deficit. Weise brushed aside skepticism voiced by fellow board members Ruiz and Virgil Grillo, replying, "There is money to pay a substantial portion of that debt." The precise sources for funds to make up the approximately $15,000 shortfall were never given, though.

Money matters may also figure in the fate of NAMAC's one-year-old journal, *Media Arts*. Editor Douglas Edwards reminded the board that "NAMAC didn't meet its full cash commitment this year." That failure forced Edwards to cut back the publication schedule from the promised six issues to four over the past year. Even so, the $24,000 project required outside support, which Edwards secured from various member institutions: the Long Beach Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences (Edwards's employer), and the Academy Foundation. Recently, the American Film Institute invested $4,000 in *Media Arts*. (NAMAC's share of *Media Arts*' 1984 budget was $10,000.) This coalition of sponsors, with NAMAC footing less than half the bill, raises certain doubts about the alliance's most tangible and visible project. Indeed, MOMA's film program was featured in the magazine's summer 1984 issue, along with excerpts from a lecture delivered by Arthur Schlesinger Jr. at AFI. Although members regularly praised Edwards's dedication and diligence, the allocation of NAMAC's scarce resources to *Media Arts* and the publication's use value received some criticism. And Edwards questioned his own willingness to take responsibility for what is essentially a one-man operation beyond 1985. NAMAC, however, seems hesitant either to modify its publication goals or find the funds necessary to guarantee independence and continuity for *Media Arts*.

The uncertainty surrounding *Media Arts* and NAMAC's overall budget could be attributed to structural flaws in the organization—the sort a more efficient board of directors might correct. On the other hand, the obvious dissatisfaction of some members with the board's plan to "streamline" itself, the shaky status of *Media Arts*, and the vague budget projection (as well as the questionable position of Third World media groups within NAMAC, discussed in Renee Tajima's accompanying article) point to the alliance's most severe predicament. Put bluntly, despite its four-year lifespan, no one seems to know what NAMAC is supposed to do. Taking stock of sentiments expressed by members, there appears to be consensus that an umbrella group of some sort is desirable, and everyone agreed (or no one disagreed) that a conference which brings together disparate segments of the far-flung media arts community provides useful exchanges and encourages debate. Past that, little binds this nebulous community together—save that most, if not all, of NAMAC's member organizations receive funds from the National Endowment for the Arts Media Program.

Speaking from the floor at the member's meeting, Julie Gustafson, director of Global Village in New York City, cited a "perception in the field that NEA started NAMAC" as an important factor in NAMAC's identity crisis. Her comment was met by a round of denials. Why, when that "perception" is not arbitrary, but based in fact? (For details of the NEA's role in the founding of NAMAC, see Debra Goldman's history of AIVF in this issue.) If NAMAC refuses to recognize the NEA connection—its own and that of its members—how can it begin to define itself in relation to the national media scene? Isn't the common denominator of NAMAC members—the designation "media arts center"—also an NEA creation? Media arts centers, NEA Media Arts specialist Don Drucker told his NAMAC audience, stand "in opposition to official culture." This may be true for some, but clearly not all; for instance, little opposition can be found within the AFI. How can one organization simultaneously represent the interests of well-heeled institutions like MOMA or Media Study/Buffalo on one hand, and those of modest, community-based programs like the Cincinnati Film Society and Women's Studio Workshop on the other, and, in addition, the interests of diverse Third World media producers and groups? Even with a facelift for NAMAC's board, this dilemma will plague the alliance.

So far, NAMAC's major achievement—apart from conferences—has been to secure management assistance grants, funneled from the NEA, for a few of its member organizations. A reestablished and restaffed office—a priority of the 1985 agenda—may make NAMAC even more attractive as a subcontractor, thus competing with its members for government and private foundation money. Bureaucracies are most comfortable dealing with other bureaucracies; perhaps this is why NEA encouraged NAMAC in the first place.

After all, oppositional culture isn't exactly the order of the day at the Reagan NEA, Drucker's comments to the contrary. As NEA Media Arts program director Brian O'Doherty cautioned last year's NAMAC conferees, "High moral seriousness and virtue is [sic] not fundable." As the Reaganites dig in for four more years of dismantling liberal funding policies, media centers will either fall into line, suffer the blows, or strategize and organize in opposition. Meanwhile, NAMAC, bogged down in its bureaucratic morass, takes no position—not at the Appalshop conference and not in the foreseeable future.

Without an identification of differences within the organization and a coherent definition of opposition that isn't emptied of all meaning because it encompasses every variety of nonprofit activity, how can NAMAC begin to set its course? As a collective voice for media centers and media makers, NAMAC has proved ineffective. Should NAMAC perish in the funding crunch, or even if it muddles on, will anyone notice?

—Martha Gever

tionwide, but PBS doesn't know how to reach them," says Ruiz, "so MACs are necessary because they can target audiences and meet specific needs instead of trying to meet mass needs. A good example is Appalshop, which doesn't have to produce what's palatable for Boston and New York, but fits regional needs." And thus develops its own audience.

The Latino Consortium, also based in Los Angeles, was established to build public television audiences for Latino programming. The consortium packages and distributes programming on a national basis through its *Presente* series. Like the other minority consortia, it is funded largely by CPB. "The Latino Consortium has been successful because it allows PBS access for independent producers and has allowed for upgrading of some local Latino programming," says Ruiz, who serves on the board of the organization. According to executive director Sylvia Morales, the consortium also provides on-the-job training and information services to producers. "Latino media is still at a very young stage," says Morales, "but some [producers] have a lot of experience. I think those who have been producing for the last 15–20 years need to mentor young Latino producers. Pioneers have made inroads, but we need new blood all the time."

Training is a primary concern for Diaz and Perez Luna, who are developing Latino media centers in their own communities. Perez Luna, who is a principal in Independence Public Media [see "A Station of Our Own," *The Independent,* November 1984], a group of independents that has just been awarded a full power television broadcast license from the FCC, works primarily as an independent radio producer. She has just completed the award-winning radio series *Latin USA* for National Public Radio, intended "to show the tremendous diversity of the Latino population in this country." Perez Luna explains, "People tend to stereotype Latinos into thinking they're a monolithic entity. But if you multiply the different Latino cultures, it creates a much more powerful impact than what people think, which is oversimplified."

Perez Luna and Len Persky also established Toucan Productions, a non-profit audio studio with 8-track and 4-track systems, including the services of an engineer. Toucan provides facilities access, training, and assistance in fundraising, with an emphasis on high technical quality. "I started out as an independent producer for NPR and I found that there are no facilities open for independents," says Perez Luna. "Len and I found that there is not only a need for production for Latinos but independent production in general—with good equipment, at a good price with people who know what you want to do and are sensitive to what independents and documentarians are trying to accomplish."

In October, Toucan sponsored a two-day training session in conjunction with San Francisco's Western Public Radio, funded by CPB. WPR also held a conference in San Francisco around the same time. The response was enthusiastic. "On the East Coast, Latino radio producers are isolated," explains Perez Luna, "but with a center like this we find out that there are more producers than we thought, and we've created a lot of energy, because people who never thought of doing radio before now want to do things." Toucan has attracted Latino and non-Latino producers alike, creating a ripple effect. Says Perez Luna, "Usually minorities are seen as low end, low tech. But they come here and work at a sophisticated level. The image of the unskilled minority is false." Toucan hopes to build the presence of Latino radio on the East Coast, to join with the movement of bilingual radio stations, both public and community, on the West Coast and in the Southwest.

The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center in San Antonio is located in a unique city. It is the tenth largest in the country, and 55 percent of the metropolitan area population is Latino. According to Diaz, a former radio producer and the director of the Center's theater, the Texas border, Mexican-based Tejano culture is strong in San Antonio, and Spanish is the primary language in most sections of the Latino comunity. As a result, the local area is served by four Spanish-language radio stations, a SIN station, and one Spanish-language cable system. Programming fare, however, is typical. SIN offers old movies, game shows, novellas and the like, while Spanish-language programming on cable is dominated by Galavision—"standard, boring programming," according to Diaz, "very stereotypical, very sexist." KLRN, the local public television affiliate, carries *Presente* but is weak in local programming dealing with Latinos.



Bill Jersey's "Children of Violence," screened at the Cine Festival.

Photo Steven Beedle

What would Diaz like to see instead? "In the case of San Antonio you have a strong culture, as opposed to Los Angeles where you have a rescue mission to preserve the culture. Here the needs are issue-oriented," explains Diaz, "educational, political, economic, cultural. Access is still very much an issue down here. Even though the public affairs directors are Chicanos, they need to be a lot more aggressive. They're still very middle-class, comfortable, safe types of people that don't want to rock the boat." Given San Antonio's strong cultural foundation, there is the potential for production and distribution to cities with smaller, or newer, Latino populations. A GCAC arts tabloid recently published was "gobbled up" in other cities, according to Diaz.

GCAC plans to develop into a full media arts center. It has programs in the visual arts, performance, music; sponsors Cine Festival, the annual Latino film and video festival; and has already produced short programs and public service announcements for Rogers Cable. The MAC will focus on training programs—from scriptwriting to hands-on production experience—as well as production, distribution, and expanded exhibition in the Center's theater space. A small group of staff instructors have already been certified by Rogers Cable as a result of their program cooperation. "But we don't have control," Diaz points out. "Rogers owns the equipment." Beyond the Center's local plans, Diaz thinks it is crucial to unify Latino producers and media support people in the U.S. Says Diaz, "I hope people realize a certain amount of urgency. I've decided to cut down my international trips—a lot of Latin American countries are interested in what's going on here, in improving distribution of their works, so I've been going around to festivals and conferences. But we've started to let our own backyards grow weeds."

In her article on Latino alternatives, Jimenez concludes: "I think everybody, not just Third World people, has a responsibility to work toward creating alternatives, developing leadership, struggling against racism." Clearly, the Latino community *is* developing alternative structures. However, that doesn't let the rest of us off the hook. The *New York Times* [November 18, 1984] quotes Kenneth B. Clark speaking at a recent conference commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Civil Rights Act: "[Liberal whites] seem to feel they have gone far enough in promoting equal rights. . . . The struggle for democracy is an ongoing burden and battle fatigue is a very real phenomenon. People get tired, particularly if they are not the direct victims of the inequities."

The burst of activity in Latin America demonstrates that the media field has not entirely lost its combative edge or social-mindedness. But, as Diaz points out, we can easily "let our own backyards grow weeds." Latino, and all other Third World media, must be taken seriously by NAMAC and the entire field—not only because they form an important part of the original vision of independent, alternative media, but because they might point a new direction for media democracy.

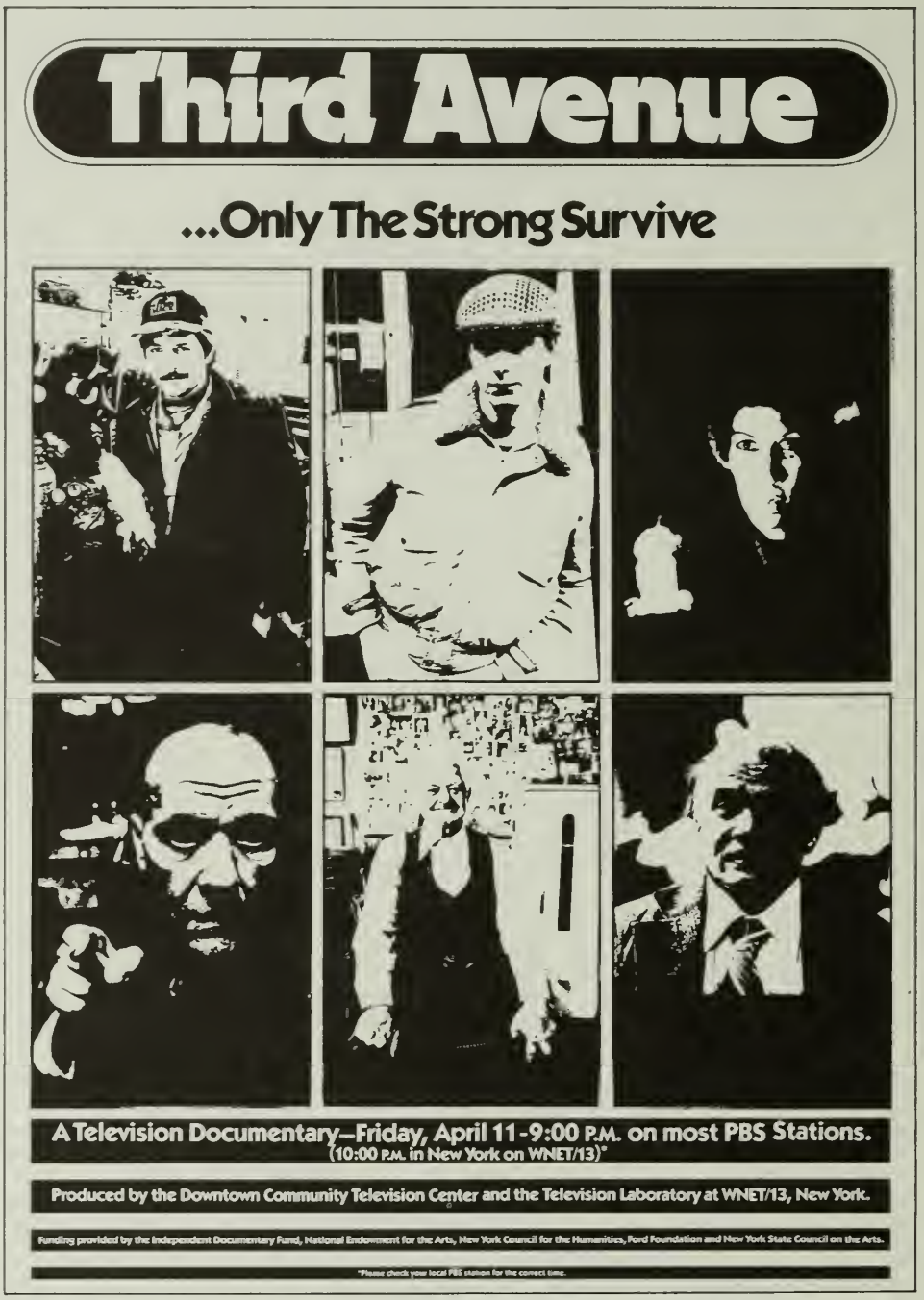
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Congratulations to AIVF on its tenth anniversary, to *The Independent*'s staff and contributors, and to the community they serve and inspire. To all of you, our best wishes for the season and the times, and our pledge of continued support. We feel your work is important, and we'll be here to help in whatever ways we can. That's what our facilities are for.

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FOREIGN CURRENCY: INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION MARKETS

Debra Wells



The human interest angle of DCTV's "Third Avenue: Only the Strong Survive" appealed to foreign audiences.

Courtesy Filmmaker

Your independently produced film has been completed. You've called in all your chips, begging funds from public television, foundations, and your relatives. Now, with your bank account cleaned out, your thoughts turn to the foreign marketplace: you want to recoup your investment, and would like the additional broadcasts to add to your resume. You've heard that many foreign countries are far more receptive than the United States to independent productions, are willing to experiment with the avant garde, and will actually program documentaries. But before you grab the next flight to the continent, there's a lot you should know about world broadcast markets and how they've recently changed, programming trends, which types of films are and are not marketable, technical standards and formats, standard contract terms, and worldwide license fees. [For purposes of simplification, in this article "film" refers to all programs discussed, including those shot on videotape.]

A brief note about my own background: much of this article is based on my experience as a distributor. At WNET/Thirteen, I was coordinator of international sales, distributing such WNET productions as *Bill Moyers' Journal* and *Dance in America,* along with independent productions produced through the TV Lab. From WNET I moved to Fox/Lorber Associates, Inc., where, as director of international sales, I worked exclusively with independents, distributing a wide range of features, documentaries, music and children's programs.

I believe that broadcast markets are still the best outlet for most independents. But in recent years, international broadcast markets have been greatly affected by the so-called "new technologies" of cable, pay TV, direct broadcast satellite (DBS), home video, etc. Since one cannot adequately understand the current broadcast market without a bit of information on how these new markets have altered the status quo, let's briefly look at these changes.

Until recently, international television has generally been structured more or less as PBS is here at home—non-commercial, with varying degrees of government support. Many countries have had only one national TV network. But those days are rapidly changing. Additional broadcast channels, some commercial, have come or are coming soon to much of the world. And while much of Europe has been heavily cabled for years, pay TV a la HBO is just arriving on foreign shores. (Pay TV is actually a misnomer, since most Europeans pay for TV already: yearly license fees based on the number of TV sets owned are collected by the govern-

ment.) Some examples are Canal Plus in France, ATN in Holland, and The Voice in Denmark. DBS is also a factor to contend with: England's Sky Channel may reach all of Europe in the near future, and Thames TV, also in England, is planning a pan-European "super-station," much like Ted Turner's Atlanta-based WTBS. VCR ownership (and therefore rental and purchase of videotapes) has until fairly recently been much higher in many foreign countries than in the U.S. Video has been especially strong in Scandinavia, the Benelux countries, and England.

Great, you're saying. More potential markets for my film. In theory, yes. In reality, these new markets have not been especially receptive to independents. The operative word here is commercial. All those culture-loving Europeans have not been rushing out to rent videotapes of documentaries. They want *E.T.* Or Michael Jackson in concert. Or.... You get the picture. The "new markets" are good for the Hollywood studios, although independents should not categorically rule them out.

The new markets have intensified competition, causing many TV networks to tighten up. When networks are faced with serious competition for viewers and the necessity of attracting advertisers, the drift tends to be toward the mainstream and the commercial. Programs that were once acceptable are no longer even considered in some cases. I have worked with several producers who had licensed films to TV networks some time ago, and were rudely surprised and disappointed when later offerings of similar quality were turned down.

Another factor causing change in broadcast markets is a desire among some countries for more indigenous original programming. A recent study by the Broadcasting Research Unit of Britain found that 40% of those questioned thought there was too much U.S. programming on British TV. And many North Americans are by now familiar with French Cultural Minister Jack Lang's condemnation of U.S. cultural domination, especially in television.

A couple of years ago I was in London, shortly after the Channel 4 broadcast of a U.S. documentary, *Quilts in Women's Lives.* This non-political program was causing a political storm. I first learned of it at the airport: a remark to the customs inspector that I was in London on business, and that I worked in the television industry, prompted a denunciation of *Quilts* and Channel 4. The inspector's reasoning was that since there are plenty of British quilters around, Channel 4 should not have shown a film on U.S. quilters. This same line of thought was expressed in most of London's newspapers. Later in the week, I met with the Channel 4 commissioning editor who bought the program; she confirmed that the uproar over *Quilts* was very real, and that in the future there would be more pressure to buy and commission works from British producers.

Anyone with a TV set knows there is virtually no foreign-produced programming on U.S. television, with the exception of some high-budget dramas by Britain's BBC and ITV networks on PBS. (Some cable stations do air foreign, non-English films, but these reach only a fraction of the U.S. market.) There is growing dissatisfaction among Europeans and the British with this lack of reciprocity, and a desire for a more even exchange. And some European broadcasters are disappointed in PBS's apparent lack of support for independents: they say they have spent too much time and money on U.S. films for which there is no U.S. support.

Another complicating factor is foreign import quotas. Not all networks have quotas, but many do. Let's say a network allows only 15% of its programming to be foreign-produced. To fit under that 15% umbrella, you must compete not only with Hollywood studios, major networks, and other independents, but with foreign networks and foreign filmmakers as well. And keep in mind that many countries have a broadcast day of only eight-to-10 hours, unlike the round-the-clock programming we've come to expect in the U.S.



Pam Yates and Deborah Shaffer's "contra" footage was licensed extensively by International television systems.

Photo: Skylight Pictures

Who said it was going to be easy? In fact, it's damned difficult to get an international broadcast deal these days—but not impossible. Many independents are still doing well internationally: licensing films, getting co-production deals, and enjoying a world-wide reputation. Even though *Dallas, Dynasty,* and *The A Team* are among the top-rated shows in most foreign countries, there's still an overseas audience for serious, challenging, and experimental programs. But how can you determine if your film has a good shot at the world market?

Let's start with pacing. Most non-U.S. films move at a much slower pace than U.S. ones. (Japan is a bit of an exception, preferring action in the North American mode.) This is not to suggest that you can get away with something that's dull, boring, or meandering, but don't worry if your film is considered slow by U.S. commercial standards.

Guest hosts are scorned by foreign programmers and audiences. As an English buyer once rather flippantly said to me, "We can think for ourselves. We don't need a celebrity to tell us that this is okay to watch." Don't worry, however, if your documentary has a celebrity intro. Just be aware that most foreign TV programmers will edit out hosts (and may even specify this in a contract).

Since most foreign program time slots are more flexible than U.S. network slots, you don't need to be concerned about adhering to rigid timing, such as the 45-minute hour, created for advertising purposes. Timing is important in marketing your film, however. Feature length (90-plus minutes) offers the most options to programmers, and is therefore the most attractive. Programmers frequently have feature slots available. But while buyers are eager for feature-length dramas and entertainment specials, it is almost impossible to place 90-minute documentaries. Sixty-minute slots are good for music and entertainment specials, and some documentaries. There seems to be resistance to 60-minute dramas.

The 30-minute program poses the most problems of all, unless that 30 minutes is part of a series. There are virtually no 30-minute slots for "stand-alone" programs. One way to solve this problem is to package a 30-minute program with other half-hours to form a series. A good distributor with an ample catalogue can often pull this off. For instance, five half-hours on the same topic or theme (women's issues, Black artists, etc.) can be licensed under one series title, with series promotions. Buyers usually love series since they can quickly fill several time slots.

Some types of films are extremely difficult to place. Comedies do not fare well: humor varies tremendously from one culture to another, with few crossover successes. (Monty Python seems to be the worldwide exception.) What has Germans rolling in the aisles may leave a Japanese audience wondering what all the fuss is about. Comedy sketches are often very topical or political and therefore get stale quickly. I once distributed several *Saturday Night Live* specials, without a tremendous amount of success: many of the *SNL* stars were unknown abroad, the buyers often did not understand the humor, and five-year-old Gerald Ford jokes are not even funny to Americans. Another drawback to comedy shows is that they do not lend themselves well to subtitling.

Locally-oriented programs, especialy documentaries, often do not meet with success abroad. An investigation of the Hartford Police Department is not going to be of much interest to viewers in Kuwait. There are exceptions to this, of course: Jon Alpert's *Third Avenue: Only the Strong Survive,* a documentary dealing with the lives of people who live or work on New York's Third Avenue, was licensed to several international TV networks and received high praise. One reason for the success of this program may have been its general human interest qualities: viewers everywhere could empathize with the lives of these New Yorkers.

Other programs which may encounter resist-

ance are those which pose special dubbing or subtitling problems. A lovely, imaginatively staged version of *Alice in Wonderland,* produced by the Minneapolis Children's Theatre for Home Box Office, was turned down by Danmarks Radio in Denmark because of the expense of dubbing. (Denmark usually subtitles, but must dub children's programs; since *Alice* was feature-length, with many characters, the expense of dubbing became prohibitive.) BRT in Belgium, after much debate, passed on *The Longest River,* a 30-minute documentary on river rafting in Chile. BRT also usually subtitles, but felt that this sort of action-adventure documentary, with the interweaving of voices of the trip's three participants, needed dubbing to be understood. The problems and expense of dubbing this type of documentary were deemed not worth the effort. Shorts (usually defined as anything less than 20 minutes, but more commonly in the three-to-15 minute range) can be licensed as filler material, but the net dollar gain is rarely worth the effort, and very few distributors now handle shorts.

But it's not all bad news. There are some programs in demand internationally. Good children's films are hot, with animation considered especially attractive. (Animation lends itself well to voiceover dubs, which can be done easily and relatively cheaply.) Good features are always wanted, and many foreign networks—such as Danmarks Radio, BRT, Channel 4, and West Germany's ZDF, to name a few—have slots specifically allocated for independent features.

Hard news journalism is in demand. Many of the world's smaller TV networks cannot afford to send correspondents to all of the globe's political hot spots, and so are quite willing to use news reports from independents. Videomaker Ilan Ziv was able to get into the Philippines shortly after the assassination of Benito Aquino—when many of the large news organizations were not allowed in—and licensed his footage to CBS and the BBC, among others. Pam Yates's footage of the *contras* in Nicaragua was licensed extensively worldwide, including to the Soviet Union and East Germany. But hard news material must be handled carefully, since it can date almost overnight. It's a good idea to have your deals lined up in advance.

There is also still a market for good documentaries, even though it can be difficult to predict which ones will be successful. Social interest topics and people portraits are good bets. Perennial favorites are wildlife and nature films, especially series. Educational films will find an audience, especially in the Third World.

Films on the arts (ballet, opera, classical music, etc.) usually find a receptive international audience. Europe, especially, has been home to the avant garde and the experimental. Both Philip Glass and Laurie Anderson were successful in Europe long before they made waves in the U.S. Music programs, especially "in concert" shows, are always popular, and music videos were hot in Europe long before MTV shook things up here. Several foreign networks are now featuring series built upon an MTV format. But while most types of music programming have done well in recent years, jazz has not. There are a large number of accomplished jazz musicians willing to work relatively inexpensively, and studio jazz sessions can be produced on a low budget, which has led to a huge surplus of jazz programs, both concert pieces and documentaries.

Foreign audiences are becoming more sophisticated, and buyers are placing more emphasis on high production values. Programs do get rejected on the basis of technical quality. Today, the standard for broadcast is 1″ tape, even though many countries still use 2″ tape. Sixteen millimeter film is also accepted for broadcast, even though the network's engineers may make a film-to-tape transfer for the actual broadcast. Three-quarter inch tape is the preferred format for screening, even though a growing handful of people will screen ½″ tape.

There are three tape formats in use: 525 NTSC (used primarily by the U.S. and Japan); 625 SECAM (used by France and the former French colonies); and 625 PAL (used by the rest of the world). It is perfectly acceptable to use 525 NTSC ¾″ tapes for screening purposes, since everyone has tri-standard decks. But if you get a broadcast deal, you will be required to supply a 1″ or 2″ tape in the proper format. NTSC tapes cannot be broadcast over a PAL or SECAM system, and vice versa.

Dubbing or subtitling is the responsibility of the buyers, with the exception of Latin America (more about this in a later article). In any sale to a non-English-language network, you will be required to provide an English transcript of the program for translation purposes.

What other factors help sell a film internationally? Previous broadcasts and theatrical releases are points in your favor. So are prizes—but only the most prestigious ones. Some worth mentioning: the Emmy, Cine Golden Eagle, Academy Award (or even a nomination), Berlin's Golden Bear, Cannes's Palme d'Or. Festival showings will pique some interest. The most impressive festivals are Cannes, Berlin, London, New York, and Telluride. Good reviews can also be important. But none of these factors will make a sale for you. In the end, that will depend upon a buyer's current needs, likes, and budget. But they may help you at least get your film screened.

Should you attend international festivals and markets in the hope of selling your film? If



A Swedish produ[illegible]r for STV compared the popularity of Skip [illegible]mberg's "Pick Up Your Feet: The Double [illegible]ch Show" to [illegible] TV seri[illegible] "Fame."

you're doing your own distribution, you'll probably have to, in order to meet people. But the big markets are so crowded and so heavily dominated by the commercial interests that it's very difficult to grab a buyer's attention. Much better, I believe, to arrange appointments with relevant buyers in their offices, away from the roar of the marketplace. The catch is that in order to find out who these buyers are, you may have to attend markets.

The most important international TV market is MIP (Marche Internationale des Programmes), held near the end of April in Cannes, France (not to be confused with the Cannes Film Festival). MIP is international TV at its glossiest. All buyers and distributors of importance attend, and while most people agree that deals usually don't get finalized here (all hype to the contrary), it's a must for public relations, information gathering, and strengthening connections. But unless you are prepared to be extremely aggressive, or have lots of contacts and appointments set up prior to arriving in France, MIP can be a very lonely and unproductive experience.

Each year, MIP publishes a guide listing all participants' names, title, company, address, phone and telex numbers. This is the international TV Bible, and you would be well advised to get your hands on a copy. Unfortunately, the only way to do this seems to be to attend MIP, since the guides are not sold or distributed separately. Other international TV markets of importance are Monte Carlo (usually held in the first part of February), MIFED (Milan in October), and the London Market, formerly the London Multi-Media Market, also in October. There is jockeying going on between MIFED and the London Market as to which will emerge as the dominant autumn event. MIFED is much older and more established and is a good place to reach the Italians, Scandinavians, and Eastern Europeans. The London Market is only three years old, and has had varying degrees of success. Both markets have their advocates.



Once you actually start marketing your film, do not be surprised at the length of time it takes to get any response at all. Buyers are notorious for holding on to screening cassettes for weeks (even months!). Most people find that it takes *at least* a year to fully play out worldwide broadcast options—from the time you first start marketing the film until it is picked up for broadcast.

If an offer is made for your film, you or your distributor will negotiate the contract. Contract terms usually specify one broadcast within one year. (West Germany is an exception, often requiring three broadcasts in five years.) Deals are usually exclusive. Some elements you can negotiate (in addition to license fee, of course) are tape conversion costs, shipping charges, and when you will receive payment.

Now, what you've been waiting for: money. First, let me say that many of the independent producers I've worked with have had wildly inflated and unrealistic expectations. Producers are astonished to find that some countries, primarily in the Third World, pay license fees as low as $50–$150 for a 60-minute program. Most developed countries do a great deal better than that, but license fees may be a lot lower than you expected.

The world broadcast market can be divided into three financial tiers. The top tier consists of Great Britain, Canada, France, Italy, West Germany, Australia and Japan. Average license fees for a 60-minute independently produced film can range from $5,000–$30,000. Features will bring more, and don't be surprised if you hear of licensing deals for Hollywood blockbusters (*Gandhi, Star Wars,* etc.) reaching stratospheric levels—$250,000 and up. Series such as *Dallas* and *Dynasty* can bring from $25,000–$75,000 per episode in these countries. Do not, however, expect your film to be bought for such sums.

Mexico and Brazil float between tiers one and two, paying $4,000–$12,000 for 60-minute films, and up to $50,000 for Hollywood features.

The second tier countries include Scandinavia, Benelux countries, Austria, Spain, Switzerland, New Zealand, Portugal, Greece, Argentina, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Singapore, and Hong Kong. License fees for 60-minute films range from approximately $2,000–$5,000, with feature prices, again, slightly higher ($3,000–$20,000). Most networks in these countries are noncommercial, with fixed, standard fees, often paying a flat per-minute rate.

The third tier is composed primarily of the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. License fees here range from $50–$800, but with some countries (Colombia, Chile, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia) paying as much as $4,000–$6,000 for features.

Eastern Europe is a category all its own. Prices are generally low, ranging from $400–$800 for a 60-minute film. East Germany and the Soviet Union are the biggest, most lucrative markets, with prices for features ranging from $4,000–$8,000. However, deals are hard to get and relatively rare.

Variety publishes an average listing of worldwide broadcast license fees at least once a year; while the figures are usually accurate, their interpretation is very important. Remember that they represent an average of all programs licensed, so the license fees for independent, non-commercial material tend to be lower than is often indicated.

International distribution is a complex, time-consuming process with ever-changing variables. You may find that being your own distributor is difficult and frustrating. I believe that for most producers a good relationship with a professional distributor is a key to success—although I am of course biased, having worked as a professional distributor for several years. As part of his or her job, a distributor is expected to have the knowledge it may take you several months to gain. A distributor should have good contacts with buyers, and will attend the major international markets and festivals, in addition to making other international business trips throughout the year. A distributor can plot strategies to take advantage of all possible "windows" for your film, making sure that every market is fully exploited. Of special importance to producers, distributors can package films, thereby enhancing licensing opportunities. A distributor should have expertise in negotiating contracts, and, based on ongoing relationships with buyers, may be able to obtain higher license fees. But whether you choose to work with a distributor or plan to do your own distribution, it's crucial to be informed about the realities of the marketplace.

This is the first in a series of articles about international broadcast markets. Subsequent articles will examine markets on an individual, country-by-country basis.

Debra Wells has been an international distributor at WNET/Thirteen and Fox/Lorber Associates, Inc. Most recently she has worked as a commercial video specialist and as a freelance writer.

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Towards an impe



In "Depot Duet," made for "Vertical Interval," Los Angeles's gilded age train station partners a local choreographer.

Kathleen Hulser

Independent media activity in the United States matured during the past few decades, and many of its founders have professionalized their work, finally penetrating at least the edges of the mainstream. Already some producers distribute through cinemas, public television, home video, and cable. As for video, although money is still scarce, the art world now accepts video as worthy of exhibition and incorporation in modern art history. Meanwhile, somewhere along to the road to respectability, social urgency and formal pizzazz seem to have been lost. And the funding and equipment crisis hitting newcomers, dissidents, and grassroots media activists threatens the survival of independent media. But all is not lost.

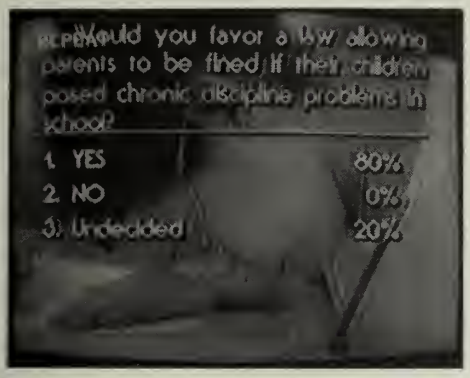
Public access cable, a widespread but underused outlet for community media, offers hope to independents—and might rescue the impulse of cultural democracy which originally spawned this movement. Public access cable is attractive in three significant ways that may ultimately make it a hospitable venue for independents and their community allies. Access radically reshapes the problem of audience, traditionally independents' weak point; for once, an independent producer can expect to see finished work piped into the homes of the many—though not all, since lower income neighborhoods are last and least cabled. The 1,000-plus access centers which have sprung up in the last decade offer a truly local base for production. And, if independents align themselves with some obvious friends, the combination of local forces may bring an audience and and community integration (with some resulting attention) that could add up to a solid financial base and a serious connection to those people supposedly served by independent films and tapes.

So far, this alliance is a theoretical construct—mostly because many independents remain wary of the "low quality" of access. In the past, independents have concentrated on reaching the largest possible audiences, with only partial success. What that effort demanded was increased "professionalism." Brainwashed by years of distribution trouble, producers worry that without a pro look their work will be ignored. But access doesn't have gatekeepers insisting that thousands be spent to achieve a high quality look. Accessers simply forge ahead with available means, confident that their wire into homes will reach some viewers. Still, some producers fear contamination by association with low-tech access. But if the quality issue is viewed in the context of local communications, instead of high art aesthetics or public television's norms, the temptation to democratize communications may win over many independents. And their contributions can help energize a new area of cultural creativity—no mean accomplishment for media activists.

One project mounted last spring in the South exemplifies such an alliance. Through the efforts of Steve Suitts of the Southern Regional Council, the Atlanta Media Project, Clark College, and 40 southern cable systems, special programming covered the spring presidential primaries in the region. Southern Network assembled materials, grilled candidates on local concerns, and edited the results into an overnight package, feeding a two-hour magazine format to the 1.25-million subscribers of the participating cable systems. This went on five days a week for nine weeks. Ambitious? In more than one way. Much of the studio work was shot by students. A mix of local origination cable staffers, independents, local print journalists, and students blanketed the field. A team of editors working nights in Atlanta boiled down the footage which was then fed via a donated satellite transponder. This was more than an exercise in local pride. It showed how people with different levels of skill could cooperate in an *ad hoc* structure which drew on cable's potential.

Local news, magazine formats, and single issue shows are public access staples, which offer the kind of ongoing exposure for alternative views that cable's multiple channels once pro-

fect video



There's nothing like an illusion of choice—which is what you get when you believe in the interactivity of interactive cable. "Dallas Interacts" is an example.



Palo Alto council member Klein decides to change his vote on the nuclear freeze during a town meeting recorded for public access.

mised: the "marketplace of ideas." (The argument that a markeplace of ideas will follow from the availability of multiple channels is derived from economic theories of free enterprise. Although cable TV's expansion has not produced such diversity, these theories have been used as a deregulation rallying point by the current Republican administration.) In Decatur, Georgia, for example, the access news show provides the only local television coverage. The news report has won acceptance from both viewers and newsmakers as a part of the media scene, and it is also transmitted by neighboring cable systems.

In Palo Alto, California, an activist made a ½" recording of a city council meeting where a local freeze resolution was on the evening's agenda. The ensuing debate over whether the motion belonged in the city council's jurisdiction presents a fascinating rendition of the effect of public discussion on changing elected officials' minds. Most council members initially opposed considering the matter, but after 40 citizens had testified they were moved to pass the measure. Such exposure prods local officals toward greater accountability, says George Stoney, who has organized and championed access for over a decade. He notes that even a minor feat such as making an official's face familiar leads to small shifts in public awareness, making officials more likely to be confronted by constituents on the street or in the supermarket. *World Peace Is a Local Issue* raises these topics, although the piece suffers from truly horrendous technical quality: the audio was so muddy that the tape required subtitles. This is noteworthy, not as a recommendation that all access be audio-video scribble, but as a reminder that content, not technical quality, is the point.

The series is one television format that has survived on cable—for good reason. With a plethora of channels, it's quite useful to have an identity linked to a regular slot, especially since cable companies still devote little or no attention to public access listings and program descriptions. A series format, when not governed by cretinous constraints on subject matter and style, can help build a regular audience because people will know when to tune in. Also, it's a lot cheaper to publicize a regular access series than, say, a film opening. The series concept in access is best deployed to attract a specific public. The famous concept of narrowcasting, no sooner invented for cable than dropped, has actually been realized in access.

What is narrowcasting? Ideally, the term refers to programming that deliberately appeals to specific groups of people, either through its themes (pregnancy, canoeing) or its idiom (Central America shows which assume some background, gay humor). Narrowcasting mitigates one of television's most pervasive structural problems: addressing everyone and, as a result, addressing no one in a degrading manner. Narrowcasting died out instantly on cable commercial channels because, for the most part, cable is commercial TV; narrow audiences cannot be exploited as a market. But narrowcasting—in its positive, non-market applications—works for public access shows that appeal to an audience previously ignored.

Members of one not so narrow group, women, have been some of the earliest and most eager respondents to the challenge of access. Cable, especially access, has proved more open to women than any other single branch of the media. Chapters of the National Organization of Women in Wisconsin exchange tapes with one another—one of the few examples of a functioning tape bicycle. In Pittsburgh, *Hershow* sprang from the concerns of media activists and women's groups. Now in its third year, the group has compiled shows on the history of the Pittsburgh women's movement, drawing largely on conference materials, and also offers a menu of international women's news, interviews with women artists, and sports. A presentation aimed at educating children about sexual abuse used puppets. The producer of that show, Kathleen Kampfe, notes that with the pending sale of the deluxe Warner Amex system to Tele-Communications, Inc., access producing may soon suffer. The Pittsburgh city government has been convinced by Wamex's complaints about the direct finances of its cable system and seems inclined to relieve the new operator of the community service portions of the franchise. (As of this writing, however, the sale of the system has not been approved.)

Similar to the neglect of women's programming, labor life and issues are conspicuously absent from American television, but not from access. No cable system in a place like Pittsburgh would be complete without the steelworkers' voice, and the *Mill Hunk Herald* show fills the bill. Produced by some of the unionists who put out a feisty newspaper of the same name, the show isn't afraid to mix humor in with its more weighty commentaries. For example, last year it spotlighted the union fashion show: the latest in steel-toe boots and T-shirts. More recently, shows have dealt with the unemployment ravaging the industrial city. Tony Buba, an independent who lives in neighboring Braddock, has contributed some of his documentaries to the show and worked with the hunks.

Another voice of labor speaks up outside of Minneapolis. *Focus on Labor* emanates from members of United Auto Workers Local 683. According to Tim Lovaas, its prime mover, the material runs on several cable systems and is listed in some suburban newspapers. His union has been "very supportive, and bought us a camera." The labor group has covered 31 events over the last four years and produced single issue shows on the demise of PATCO, the fate of OSHA, and union contract concessions.

The Labor Film Club in New York got into the access act recently with *Labor Journal.* Shown once a month, the half-hour slot often runs independent films and tapes. One excellent show they produced themselves examined trade unions in El Salvador and the U.S. union response to government repression. The project coordinator, Carol Anshien, currently circulates that tape to other cable labor shows.

These examples demonstrate that narrowcasting can work for individual series. What about the larger, glossier, and usually non-access-generated cable theme channels? Women's channels, programmed nationally, have multiplied over the last few years. It has been suggested that other women's programming be slotted along with the fare on these national

channels, so interested audiences can pinpoint the subject amidst the variety. Likewise, the modest individual labor shows emanate from small groups, not a central union bureau as does, for example, the *America Works* series produced by the Labor Institute for Public Affairs, a project of the AFL-CIO. Would these small-scale endeavors work alongside their well-heeled cousins? The idea was debated in an issue of *Community Television Review,* the National Federal of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP) magazine, partly because allying an access show with an ad-supported series was seen as a way to tap regular producing bucks.

That was some time ago, and now most access advocates recoil from ads. But not all. Jaime Davidovitch ran his New York *Live! Show* first on public access and then for a year on leased access (like public access, leased access is open to all, first-come, first-served, but the user pays for the channel time, and is, in turn, allowed to sell ads). Davidovitch managed to round up enough advertising to pay the minimum costs of the show, and the ads reflected the artsy, ironic nature of the program. These pitched such products as artist-made clothes and *Real Life* magazine, an art/literary journal. But Manhattan Cable TV raises its leased access rates every year, so shows that survive may thus ensure, through their success, their own demise. Like the *Live! Show.*

Another case of ad-aided access is BCTV in Brattleboro, Vermont. This small town and its cable system don't have a lot of green to throw at democratic communications. That didn't discourage staffer Marshall Williams, who figured that the channel might profit from the absence of any local TV rivals. Offering a year's run of an ad for $500 attracted quite a few local merchants, allowing the channel to cover everything from town meeting spats over snow removal to poetry readings at nearby Marlboro College.

The problem of a financial base worries accessers. So far, the bulk of access funding has flowed from cable operators, seeking public image enhancement and complying with the franchises. But with a deregulating FCC in the saddle and HR 4103 signed and sealed [see "Compromise or Compromised: Congress Passes Cable Bill," *The Independent,* December 1984], this assured funding stream may soon turn into a free-enterprise dust bowl. The NFCLP, concerned for the survival of its fledgling producing community, recommends a three-legged funding stool: cable operator money, a percentage of the franchise fee, and yearly helpings from the budgets of organizations—such as the National Organization of Women, the SPCA, the Little League, etc.—that most directly use and benefit from access.

Some access centers have already achieved this mix. In other locales, the newer access set-ups may find that lack of a track record will inhibit fund-raising. This is certainly an area where early independent participation could be mutually beneficial. Showing examples of local independent work whets the appetite of a locality for democratic communications and, at the same time, gives independent work exposure. Involving independents in the early stages on an access operation will ensure at least some use of the facilities during the critical start-up period. And these contributions to access production will be remembered when the days of cooperative financing of projects become a reality. Independents will also benefit from establishing direct relations with activists, and from a showcase for work, often so hard to find in smaller localities without contemporary art galleries or a sympathetic PTV station.

One route out of the funding dilemma posed by insecure cable operator donations is to forge institutional alliances. Stoney cites access centers formed in schools: board of education money, if used in conjunction with the total freedom from content censorship which is access' pride and trademark, can provide an enlightened base for activities, along with space, equipment, and budding talent. One NFLCP Hometown Video Festival prize this year went to *Princeton Newsweek,* a news format show produced by students living in a suburb of Cincinnati. Early on, the show attracted favorable attention, and the superintendent of schools pried money from the mayor's budget to build a studio. The operation went mobile when the school district donated a retired handicapped bus, which *Newsweek* faithfuls rapidly converted into a traveling TV unit. "When the football players return for training camp in August, so do we," says Stan Everett, project coordinator. "Our TV camp prepares the kids for a year of producing. They don't get credits or grades for this extracurricular activity, so only the most motivated come and stick with it."

Beyond the obvious advantages of money, space, and community support, involving students brings other blessings in tow. Imagination and a feeling of freedom aren't always easy to stimulate in the novice videomaker, but the young don't often have the problem that one cable access staffer called "the Himalaya of access": confidence. And the TV, vid-game fed youth of today are likely to have imbibed some sense of visual storytelling after all those years glued to the tube. Meanwhile, modest means of production may help to guide their imaginations away from the temptation of electronic extravaganza.

Low-tech is a way of life for access, a counterweight to the profligate industry norm. Sue Miller Buske, head of NFLCP, says that ½" industrial equipment is spreading. "It's light, it's tough, and it costs about half as much as a ¾" portable rig." In Atlanta, ½" production is the custom for the 200 to 250 producers who work regularly with access, except for productions that are expected to circulate widely. Atlanta producing team James Bond and Dick Richards shoot the weekly *American Music Show* in their apartment with their own ½" equipment. The



"Trip to Paris" unveils some of the most seduc



Andrew Wolf, the subject of another access s
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funky, talky format is a kind of animated radio, occasionally lightened with such location pseudo-events as "the burning of Atlanta," a tale of demented terrorism and Southern nihilism strange to behold. In Dallas, John Leveranz and other producers of *ArtsEye* shot a low-tech show in ½" called *Trip to Paris.* Highlights of the deadpan mini-epic included a survey of the Paris, Texas art community, visits to the fashion center of Main Street, and stunning shots of the Mediterranean coast between Dallas and Paris. In contrast, Dallas also spawned the stupidest high-tech access show encountered in this research. *Dallas Interacts* asked the viewers moronic questions, like whether they favored fines for parents of students who acted out in school.

Trip to Paris raises some interesting questions about style, content, and the nature of access. Like the *American Music Show* and the *Live! Show,* humor makes this access accessible. While using documentary methods—the Paris crew didn't set up scenes, recruit actors, dig up costumes, etc.—the piece isn't a documentation of someone else's activity. Many of the arts access formats showcased at last summer's NFLCP conference were precisely that: a record of an event, work, or artist. When successful, this approach can be enticing. For example, in Alhambra, California, cable-staffer Anne-Marie Piersimoni has pioneered a format that inserts the arts into regular cable fare. *Vertical Interval* consists of documentary segments on the arts which run between programs anywhere on the cable dial. In one, Los Angeles artist Harry Gamboa confesses that he's not sure how his identity as a Chicano influences his work as a photographer and performance artist. In another *Vertical Interval,* a dancer/choreographer performs a piece created for the camera in the baroque Los Angeles train station. By exploring the special qualities of this special site, the dancer wins our interest, which might not have happened if she had concentrated on competing with the technical feats seen on *Dance in America.* Another example of favorable localism in the arts documentation is a half-hour work made in Newton, Massachusetts, about pianist Andrew Wolf. Steering clear of the star-bio genre portraits of a classical musician, *Andrew Wolf Variations* sees the virtuoso as performer, teacher, administrator of a music school, housespouse, and neurotic. The intimate tone of the documentary climaxes in a moment of self-parody when Wolf talks about vacuuming compulsively as a relief from the dreaded routine of practicing: "When it seems to be getting worse and worse, the more I practice." Caryn Rogoff's *Not-for-Profit TV* in New York City is built around documenting performances and other events which would not otherwise make it to the tube. She believes that this visit-to-a-live-event technique suits the appetite of access for fast and easy production. *Not-for-Profit* documentaries have included excerpts from a Mass Transit Theater play, performance by the Human Condition band, and selections from the Artists' Call on Central America held last January.

Documentation of the arts by no means exhausts the possibilities of access, and it's likely that invention and fantasy may be the access wave of the future. Not only is there a limit on how many events and artists flourish locally, the experience of repeatedly handling equipment and making shows is sure to infect some access producers with the urge to make up their own material. Already, in New York City, several artist-made TV shows have run for years, from *Cast Iron TV* to *Paper Tiger TV, Potato Wolf* to the *Live! Show.* While most of these are now suffering from burn-out, arts council defunding, and even creative fatigue, the outlook for accessers in less pressured environments is better.

These trends indicate what George Stoney suspected at the outset of access: home-made community television is part of our cultural language, and that's its importance—beyond the success of any individual show. The warmth of its direct address rests on local reference points. These range from knowledge of place (the best buffalo wallow, the most hectic hour at Vinnie's bar and restaurant), regional accent and humor (people speak in their own rhythms, counteracting the speech standardization of national television), and local personality (talking history from the town's only resident who fought in the Spanish Civil War or the last chicken farmer left in the county). This particularity makes access, with its "low production values," watchable—and engaging. It gives access the character of a fiesta, not a spectacle (during the Hawaii Handicapped Marathon, a man tells how he turned home when he wheeled by his street during the race, compared to the abusively patriotic Olympic coverage).

As access develops and finds its feet, I think we will see video-griots emerging in local productions where the style of presentation and regional content reinforce one another. The quality of access should be assessed in terms of its reclamation of a piece of the TV wasteland for a different kind of expression. As Julio Garcia Espinosa points out in his essay, "Towards an Imperfect Cinema," the emerging Cuban cinema in the 1960s reflected the way it was produced, and this poor look counted *for* it.

Towards an imperfect video is an appropriate framework for understanding access. Technical limitations, far from posing an obstacle, are its greatest defence against being seen as the poor relation to the mass media. They're a reminder that respectability and gloss aren't the goal. They're a nudge to keep the material significant because triviality can't be hidden under a deluge of special effects and star anchors. By addressing people, not Nielsens, access has a fighting chance to become a home favorite.

Kathleen Hulser is a journalist and media activist who has made one public access show.

©Kathleen Hulser 1985

The Cannes Game

Dina and Marisa Silver

Surrounding every movie that finds its way to theatrical distribution is the "buzz"—the word of mouth generated in anticipation of the film's theatrical debut. In the case of well-financed studio films, this is created by the extraordinary publicity that stars, famous directors and "high concept" story lines can generate in combination with enormous advertising budgets.

For independent filmmakers, the excitement surrounding a new film must frequently be generated without the help of these dazzling carrots to dangle before the public's eye. But film festivals, and particularly the several highly publicized and internationally acclaimed ones, often create a perfect climate from which a small film can jump from oblivion into public awareness.

We wanted our film *Old Enough* to be viewed at the Cannes Film Festival for two reasons: first was the knowledge that Orion Classics, our U.S. theatrical distributor, needed to create a buzz for *Old Enough* in order to manage a successful theatrical run. We had to find a way to let people know this film existed—but with no stars, a first-time director and producer, no sex, no violence, no car chases, no aliens, this was not an easy bill to fill. Our second goal, since we controlled all foreign rights to the film, was to generate foreign sales.

The Cannes Film Festival has an aura of impenetrability. People always ask us how we got the film into Cannes, as if we might share some magical secret we had discovered. In fact, applying to Cannes was no more mysterious than filling out a two-page application and sending a copy of our film to France. A first film is eligible for entry into all three sections of the festival: the Main Competition, the Directors Fortnight, and the Critics Week. To maximize our odds, we applied to all three sections, having been assured by the French Film Office in New York that this would not harm our chances.

Our first telegram from Cannes gently informed us that *Old Enough* had not been selected for the Main Competition. A few days later we received a phone call: another rejection, this time from the Critics Week. By the end of March, we had heard nothing from our remaining hope, the Directors Fortnight, so we made our peace with rejection and scouted new ways to create the "buzz."

One morning late in April, we got a phone call from Paris inviting *Old Enough* into the Directors Fortnight. But our ecstatic celebrations were abruptly ended when it hit us that we had just three weeks to get ready for Cannes.

What qualifies as "getting ready" for Cannes? For some films it means hiring airplanes and skywriters to fly over the Croisette, Cannes' main avenue. For others it means advertising and publicity budgets that exceeded our entire production budget. We clearly couldn't compete on this level, but we knew that to make *Old Enough* visible among the thousands of films screened in and out of competition at Cannes would require us to spend some money.

Assimilating the advice of everyone we knew who knew Cannes, we determined our minimum publicity outlay: 500 posters (for wild posting); 2,000 bilingual glossy press packets artistically coordinated with our poster and containing color and black-and-white photos and other pertinent information; and 1,000 throw-aways to hand out on the days *Old Enough* was screened. In addition to these costs, the film had to be subtitled in French, we hired European publicists, and we had to cover our flights and accommodations at the festival. Our grand total, including the several ads placed in Cannes' daily papers during our stay, came to $15,000 (which, fortunately, we had allocated in our production budget for publicity purposes).

This is a lot of money, but the name of the game at Cannes is creating a sense of urgency on the part of buyers and a "want to see" impulse among critics and opinion makers in relation to your film. It is possible to "do" Cannes with less money, and many filmmakers do just that. But as we look back, it's hard to determine where we might have cut corners, and what effect this belt tightening might have had. Whatever money you can spend at Cannes will increase your film's visibility at the festival, and will likely bring back to you more in foreign sales than would otherwise have been possible.

It's hard to describe the chaos that is Cannes. Every day there is a sea of press events and gala parties, not to mention scores of screenings, meetings, pitches and random encounters all geared toward wooing a besieged press and buyer community. Before we left for Cannes, everyone ardently suggested that we hire publicists for the U.S. and European press. A profound weight was lifted from our shoulders when Orion Classics hired a terrific publicist who handled our U.S. press coverage in Cannes. Orion Classics' presence was invaluable, not only because its efforts began generating word of mouth for *Old Enough,* stateside, but also because it freed us to focus our energy on foreign sales.

We were also told it was important to get foreign press coverage in order to entice foreign buyers to see our film. The well-established, internationally connected publicists were priced way out of our market—about $7,000 for the two-week festival. Instead, we hired two young French publicists who were equipped to handle only the French press. Although they kept us quite busy with interviews and photo sessions, in retrospect we think that our own press kits, ubiquitous posters and ads sufficed.

We spent 10 days at Cannes prior to *Old Enough*'s screenings constantly strategizing. Where shall we put the posters? When shall we put up the posters? If it rains (as it did every day), should we reposter? How should we distribute the press packets? Whom should we target individually among both the press and the buyers? Must the packets be hand delivered? How might we notify buyers of our post-screening party, intended to initiate sales discussions? Such concerns seemed urgent and critical to the film's success. We were plagued by doubts. Would anyone come to see the movie? Would they even know it was here? What if it poured the night of our screening? Would they ever choose *Old Enough* over the star-studded films of the main competition? Were our screenings too late in the festival? Would all the important buyers have already left the festival for sunnier climes?

To compensate for what we perceived to be the disorder and frenzy all around us, we determinedly tried to control and create our film's destiny at the festival. But the whirling dervish that is Cannes has an energy and system and order all its own, and it cannot be shaped or outguessed. No amount of Herculean effort can change the weather, screening schedules, or an audience's response to your film.

After all your publicity and marketing strategies have been set into gear, your most powerful assets are your mouth and your energy. You must always be "on," speaking effortlessly and excitedly about your film as if you had never discussed it before. Allow yourself to crash from the repetition and tedium only in the privacy of your hotel room.

The pay-off for all this hope and worry is the screening itself. In the pouring rain, on the night of our Cannes premiere, *Old Enough* played to an overflow crowd, and the feeling was extraordinary. Somehow we had created a certain heat around our film. We'll never know whether our strategies and publicity materials had done the trick, or whether something intangible and ran-

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dom had sparked the interest. It was probably a bit of both.

In the days following *Old Enough*'s screenings we negotiated with various foreign buyers and distributors, personalizing what must later be done via telex and telephone. Since the number of buyers at Cannes is seemingly infinite, and since as newcomers we had no particular mechanism to assess which companies were solid and which were fly-by-night, the opportunity to check someone out face to face was invaluable.

Cannes is more about "deals" than it is about films. The opportunity to sell your product is at its peak. If someone really wants your movie for a certain territory, you've got a fair amount of leverage at Cannes because competition among buyers for films raises the purchase price. If you're offered a good deal at Cannes, close on it there. Capitalize on the pressures of buyers to purchase product.

You can maximize your film's potential at Cannes by arriving prepared with good press materials and by talking your film up wherever you go. A powerful poster image with the date and times of your screenings has tremendous impact. At the same time, it's good to realize that there is order in the madness. People come to Cannes to see films: they will come to your screenings. Buyers are there to purchase product: they will approach you if they are interested. Arrive prepared and ready to do some hustling, but also relax a bit, sit back and enjoy the show.

Marisa Silver is a film director living in New York. Dina Silver is an independent film producer, also New York-based. The sisters collaborated on **Old Enough**, *which marks a feature film debut for each.*

The Cannes Film Festival will take place May 8–20. Deadlines for entry are not available at this time; interested filmmakers should contact the French Film Office, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10151; tel. (212) 832-8860. The Film Office can also tell you when Official Section director Gilles Jacob and Directors Fortnight director Pierre-Henri Deleau will visit the U.S. Send a letter describing your film to the section you are interested in and cc it to the French Film Office. Within the Official Section there are 3 categories: In Competition: open to features or shorts made within the previous 12 months and not entered in another event; Out-of-Competition: features which do not qualify for competition because they are previous award winners; A Certain Look: significant work in fields of innovative features, documentaries, compilation films—a catch-all for those which, again, do not qualify for competition. No U.S. independents were screened in The Official Section in '84. Applications for this section can be obtained from Festival International du Film, 71, rue du Faubourg St. Honore, F 75008; tel. 1 266 92 20; telex: 650765 F. Category 2 is the Critics Week, which in '84 featured Billy Woodbury's **Bless Their Little Hearts**. *They accept first or second features only, narrative or documentary, completed within 2 years prior to the festival and not entered in any major European festival. Contact: Robert Chazal, President, Semaine International de la Critique, 73, rue d'Anjou, F 75008 Paris, France; tel: 1 387 36 16; telex: 650407/408. Films for this section are screened in France. All shipping and insurance fees are the responsibility of the filmmaker. Subtitles are not required for preview; workprints may be submitted. Send a script in French. The 3rd section is the Directors Fortnight which in '84 featured Bette Gordon's* **Variety**, *Jim Jarmusch's* **Stranger Than Paradise** *(which won the Camera d'Or for best first feature) and* **Old Enough**. *Open to features, documentaries, and animation made within the past 12 months and not shown outside its country of origin. Contact: Quinzaine de Realisateurs, Societe des Realisateurs de Films, 215 rue du Faubourg St. Honore, F 75008 Paris, France; tel: 1 561 01 66; telex: 220064 (ref: 1311). For the Film Market, which runs concurrently with the festival but is administered separately, your film cannot have been entered in MIFED, nor be over 1 year old. All formats can be screened inexpen-*

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sively. If accepted, films must be subtitled in French at the filmmaker's expense and possibly blown up to 35mm.

ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL: THE OLD WORLD AND THE NEW

The Asian American International Film Festival is meant to promote and highlight the filmmaking accomplishments of Asians and Asian Americans. It is organized by Asian CineVision (New York's Chinatown-based community media center headed by Peter Chow), programmed by Asian Americans and exhibited at the Rosemary, a Chinese-language theater in New York's Chinatown. The interconnectedness and common needs of this group, beyond the promotion of their individual films, forces us to analyze the execution of this festival as a service for, by, and of a definite ethnic group with specific needs as artists, filmmakers and viewers.

Despite the retrenchment tactics by government arts funding organizations like the National Endowment for the Arts, which has severely restricted the flow of grants to minority producers, the Asian American filmaking community has managed to maintain a level of production high enough to support the existence of the AAIFF. In 1983, three of the films in the festival were also screened at the New York Film Festival. But by all accounts, 1984 has not been a watershed year for Asian American filmmakers. Two of the films in this spring's festival, Yaping Wang's *East to West,* and Jason Hwang's *Afterbirth,* were rejected by the AAIFF in 1983, only to be accepted for exhibition, upon being resubmitted in '84. Jim Yee, director of the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) in San Francisco, called 1984 "one of those in-between years." Still, in 1984 Asian CineVision presented five Asian American documentaries, four Asian American narratives, and six native Asian feature narratives over a weekend, out of approximately twice that many works submitted.

The pull between the two sources of films—the U.S. and Asia—has created an unprecedented situation for festival organizers. Begun in 1978 as a strictly Asian American festival, Asian works were soon included for practical reasons—not enough Asian American works were available and they were not strong enough to justify the festival's potential expansion. Originally held at the New York University's Tisch Auditorium over a period of three weekends, the festival provided an atmosphere in which Asian groups could gather and exchange literature and ideas. The move to a commercial theater along with the telescoping of the festival into a single weekend enhanced the popular appeal of the festival, bringing in a larger and more ethnically mixed audience, as well as legitimizing the festival in the eyes of the local press, whose coverage increased. The downside of this restructuring has been that tight scheduling has prevented a comprehensive overview of all the films, and the identity of the festival risks becoming confused when clear lines are not drawn between the Asian and the Asian American films. One filmmaker pointed out that lumping together a James Wong Howe retrospective with leftists documentaries and films from six different Asian countries "takes away from the impact of each."

Casey Lum, festival manager, has said in reference to the Asian films, "If the film doesn't express anything about society or culture, we're not interested. They have lots of places to be shown. They don't need us and we don't want them." Amy Chen of the selection committee has echoed the political convictions of the festival by saying that they are not looking for overtly commercial works, and reject those with sexist or racist overtones. The inclusion of more Asian features is definitely responsible for the increased popularity of the screenings among the Asian community, which is not accustomed to seeing work about the problems of Asian Ameri-

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cans. Chow and company have proposed an expansion of Asian films to include all the Asian countries, and that programming and scheduling decisions be concentrated within the ACV staff. In 1984 the selection committee did not have as great an input into the festival as it did in the past. The problem here, by most accounts, is that ACV seems to be in a state of perpetual reorganization, depending largely on volunteers with no festival organizing experience. Staff members leave because New York offers so many other opportunities (not to mention the "burn-out" factor). As participating producers and programmers noted, a vision of growth possibilities and a commitment to being either staff directed or maintaining a looser structure are needed.

As a positive experience for filmmakers and as a cultural force, the benefits of the festival are clear. According to Janet Yang, co-producer of *East to West,* "Had it not been for this festival, the film could not have been in other festivals—and various non-theatrical exhibitors would not have called." Jim Yee credits the festival for "soliciting films not normally seen, for setting an important precedent as a model for other parts of the country in terms of cultural media." Chris Choy, whose documentary feature *Mississippi Triangle* had its New York premiere at the festival in 1984 noted, "Because of the festival, programmers have become aware of a whole group of filmmakers." She cited New York's Asia Society as an outlet which has expanded its screening series to include Asian American productions. And San Francisco-based documentarian Loni Ding, who screened her most recent work, *Nisei Soldier: Standard Bearer for an Exiled People* in 1984, said she supports the festival "politically, and because of what it does for filmmakers." She said that ACV did a "good job" with the festival in New York and that "it seems to be improving every year." She continued, "Precisely because it is a minority festival, it helps to strengthen the credibility and legitimacy of this kind of film for the viewing public." Darryl Chin, one of the festival's programmers, said "It's a way for filmmakers to get involved in Asian American media groups if they haven't already, and of finding out what's happening in other cities."

ACV oversees the logistical minutae for the festival, coordinating the festival in New York and overseeing its distribution to a growing list of cities nationwide. Ding explained, "New York has a strong Asian American base and strong film base. ACV's job is to make connections around the country. You have to have a core group around the country. You've got to have site coordinators with commitment." Choy noted, "The press screenings were usually not that well attended, and could be better organized." Jason Hwang explained that journalists attending the conferences seemed to lack a context for seeing the importance of a $3,000 film with a message rather than a $20 million film from Hollywood, but added that he hoped the festival screenings would expose them to "new ways of making films and ideas not common to the mass market." One filmmaker suggested that the New York opening night benefit might be more useful if it were "classier," giving corporate and individual sponsors an opportunity to meet filmmakers. "The festival will improve incrementally. As they prove they are important and doing a good job they'll get more money, creating a snowball effect." Lum noted that both a representative from the People's Republic of China embassy and one from the Chinatown Community Benevolent Association, a pro-Taiwanese group, attended the affair, apparently ending a hostility which had been expressed by conservative groups to ACV when pro- and anti-Communist films were first screened together.

The national tour, for which filmmakers are paid, but which may tie up a filmmaker's work for four months, elicits mixed comments. The 1984 tour began in Vancouver at the Pacific Cinema before going on to FACETS Muli-Media in Chicago, the Organization of Ten Asian Women in Washington D.C., the Neighborhood Film Project in Philadelphia, NAATA in San Francisco, the Asian American Resource Workshop in Boston, and ending up at Houston's Southwest Alternate Media Center. ACV delivers the film shipment to the first city along with 300 copies of the poster. Lum said that "ACV tries to be the central coordinator for the whole tour," providing filmmakers with a list of cities and dates; but almost all of the Asian films, along with *Mississippi Triangle,* were withheld because of distribution hang-ups, requiring each city to negotiate separately for them. NAATA accepted only David Chan's *Kind of Yellow* from the festival, choosing to put together its own package. But outside of the coasts, organizations do not necessarily have the capacities to stage a festival of Asian and Asian American films or the contacts to find the Asian features which will bring in audiences; as Ding says, "ACV has not had the money to make personal contacts [in other cities] to train anyone to make a festival." She added, "Aspects need to be worked out. It's not as organized as it should be," citing films which arrive in the wrong can and lack of technical skills on the part of the media center workers. But she said the tour is essential to building "a critical mass, a national identity" among Asian Americans throughout the country. Renee Tajima, 1983 film selector and former ACV administrative director, said, "The festival is very important for the improved development and presence of Asian American film. But it needs to have a staff with experience organizing festivals." —*Robert Aaronson*

The 1985 Asian American International Film Festival will be held in June. Deadline: Feb. Festival is non-competitive and welcomes submissions in 16 and 35mm in any length or genre. No entry fee; films may be previewed on

cassette. Film must have an Asian or Asian American as primary producer or director; films made by non-Asians will be considered only if they deal in an outstanding manner with a subject of vital importance to the Asian or Asian American community. Newer films given priority. Material must originate on film. Contact Casey Lum, Asian CineVision, 32 East Broadway, NY, NY 10002; tel: (212) 925-8685.

ATHENS: SMALL CLASSIC

"Laid back" and "low key" were two expressions used frequently to describe the 1984 Athens International Film Festival. Don't go there expecting to sell; don't go there expecting to make high-powered deals; don't go expecting glamour. Do go to see lots of good work, to meet interesting people and to talk about film in a relaxed atmosphere.

Supported by a strong reputation as a showcase for independently made films and video, Athens enters its twelfth season with some changes. For the first time the three components—a film festival, a video festival and a film conference—will be held separately, partially because the video was being overshadowed by the films.

The festival's new director, Emily Calmers, took over last year from Guillio Scalinger, who founded the festival and ran it for ten years. She had the difficult task of coming to the festival with little time to get oriented, with an enormous budget cut, a former "reign" to be compared to, little festival-directing experience, a staff of new young inexperienced student volunteers, and an eleventh-year season which inevitably would be compared to the very gala tenth-year celebration of 1983. Given all that, I think she not only put on a good festival but promises to become a splendid director; however, while researching this article, I heard many of last year's participants express feelings of disappointment about the festival. Among the complaints were the small amounts of prize money, the dearth of publicity, small audiences, and transportation difficulties. But the festival's budget was recently increased, which should solve some of these problems.

Plans for the 1985 season sound exciting. The theme is "Exploring National Cinemas"; independent filmmaking in three yet-to-be-decided countries will be examined in-depth with screenings, guests, panel discussions and workshops. The number of features presented will be increased to about 30 films. Calmers says that efforts will be made to build a larger community audience.

Athens combines feature presentations (U.S. and foreign independents) with films in competition. Many of the guests—filmmakers whose work is being shown or who are giving workshops—are also judges. Last year's theme was

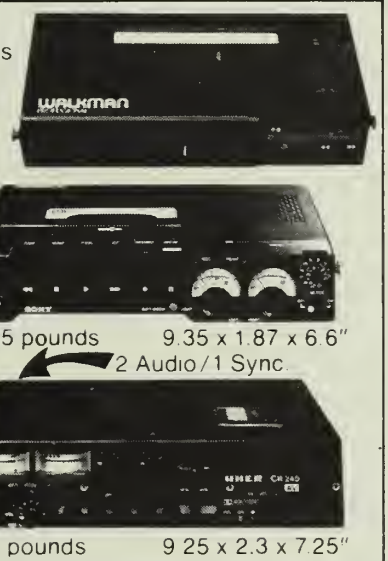
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"Alternatives to Hollywood"; guests included Peter Greenaway (*The Draughtsman's Contract*), experimentalist Peter Rose, and Herby Smith and Elizabeth Barret of Appalshop in Kentucky. The competition itself includes a wide range of categories, including documentary, short story, animation, experimental, performance, education, instructional, comedy, and Super-8.

Athens is a small college town in southern Ohio—a rural, Appalachian area. One of the festival's goals is to bring otherwise unseen films into the area. As the only festival in the region, it attracts area film and videomakers, media people and artists, although not many distributors or buyers attend unless they are there in their capacity of judges. But, as Herby Smith of Appalshop said, "Athens' weakness is also its strength." While its isolation discourages attendance, it also provides an atmosphere conducive to long informal discussions about film with interesting people who are easily met among the sparse crowd. It was very simple, distributor Ron Epple told me, to get together with Peter Rose and Peter Greenaway for a wonderful lunchtime conversation.

What about facilities? Four screening rooms in town run a continuous variety of feature presentations, feature-length competitive films, and shorter films. Projection systems are good. A very classy, informative, easy-to-read catalogue is put out with schedules, descriptions of films, biographies of guests.

The best film in each category receives the Golden Athena (which was $100 last year, but promises to be more in 1985). There are also special merit awards in each category. The judges are asked to write comments about each film, which are sent to entrants after the festival. Last year's winners included *Seventeen* by Joel DeMott and Jeff Kreines in the feature category; *Machine Story* by Doug Miller in animation; and *The Business of America...* by Larry Adelman of California Newsreel in the social/political documentary category. —*Josephine Dean*

Deadline: Feb. 18. Fees from $10–$65, depending on length. Cassettes accepted for preview. Festival will pay return shipping for U.S. films. Applications available from AIVF (send SASE) or by calling Emily Calmers. Contact: Athens Center for Film and Video, P.O. Box 338, Athens, OH 45701; tel. (614) 594-6888.

Josephine Dean is a documentary filmmaker living in New York City.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson and Deborah Erickson. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement**, and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

● *ATLANTA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL,* April 19–28. This 10th competition continues to attract high caliber judges: Peter Rose, Deirdre Boyle, Cindy Furlong & Warrington Hudlin in 1985. Audiences vary with showtimes: matinees are virtually empty, while evening programs draw 50–75 people. Local TV, radio & newspaper cover the festival; local TV stations & businesses provide $5,000 in cash & equipment; divided in 1984 among 8 video winners (including Flip Johnson's *The Roar from Within & Seventeen* by Joel Demott & Jeff Kreines) & 9 film winners (*Invisible Citizens: Japanese-Americans* by Keiko Tsuno, *Possibly in Michigan* by Cecilia Condit, & *From the Hotel Will Rogers* by Dan Boord). 1984's sell-out opener was Bette Gordon's *Variety*; Victor Nunez has been invited to present *A Flash of Green* this year. 16mm, S-8, ½" & ¾" accepted; narrative features are "really welcome." Deadline: Feb. 18. Fees: $10 up to 15 mins, $15: 15–29 mins; $20: 30-59 mins; $25: 60 & over; $35 for distributors. Contact: IMAGE Film/Video Center, 972 Peachtree St., Ste. 213, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 874-4756.

● *BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* March 24–30. 16mm & videocassette productions up to 60 minutes released since January 1983 are eligible to compete in 12 categories & numerous subcategories for cash awards, statuettes & certificates. Separate prizes for films & video. Entry fees: $25–50 depending on length. Deadline: Jan. 20, after which entry fees go up until deadline of Feb. 1. Films selected for competition returned after final screening, April 25–May 5. Booklet with application available from: Birmingham International Educational Film Festival, c/o Alabama Power Company (the fest's main sponsors), P.O. Box 2641, Birmingham, AL 35291.

● *NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* April 27–28. 350 16mm & ¾" videotapes expected to compete for awards in 13 subject categories, with a separate competition for students. Prize winning titles get high profile among national educational media buyers, particularly in California; works are exhibited in Los Angeles & Oakland. Productions must have been completed after Jan. 1 & may include drama as well as documentary & "other," as long as they have educational merit. Fees: $55–$115, depending on length. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: NEFF, 314 E. 10th St., Oakland, CA 94606.

● *USA FILM FESTIVAL,* March 22–30. This festival has become an important stop on the independent circuit, noted for strong selections & excellent judges. Devoted exclusively to U.S. films since its inception in 1970, the USA Festival plans to be 90% independent this year. New director Bob Hull invited 15 films from the Independent Feature Project, but AIVF board member Barton Weiss of Dallas said, "Hull really didn't like much of what he saw. No one knows what to expect yet." Prizes for the newly competitive Discovery Showcase are $3,000, $2,000 & $1,000. The Short Film & Video Competition enters its 7th year with prizes of $1,000, $750, $500 & $350. Judges include Charles Samu of HBO, Bill Sloan of MOMA, Texas documentarian Jan Krawitz, and *Entertainment Tonight*'s Leonard Maltin. Weiss noted, "They tend to look for something more slick in shorts. Last year's winner, John Coles' *Hellfire,* was the only entry

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in 35mm." Short Film Competition deadline: Feb. 15; entry fee: $25. Extended deadline for Discovery Showcase: Feb. 1. Contact: Pam Proctor or Bob Hull, USA Film Festival, P.O. Box 58789, Dallas TX 75258; (214) 760-8575.

FOREIGN

● *BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL DU FILM FANTASTIQUE ET DE SCIENCE FICTION,* March 15-30. 4 prizes are awarded: Le Corbeau; the Special Prize for Fantastic Film; Special Prize for Science Fiction Film; Best Short Future Film. Deadline: January 30. Include summary, technical notes & photos. Contact: Peymey Diffusion, 114 Ave. de la Reine, 1000 Brussels, Belgium; tel: 22 42 17 13; telex: 61344 ext. 113.

● *CARTAGENA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* June. High profile for U.S. independent producers, although the market activity for South America is at the Rio Film Festival, which debuted this year. Cartegena screened 72 films from 24 countries in 1984 including U.S. independents *Alone in the Dark, Liquid Sky, Atomic Cafe, Koyaanisqatsi, Rockers, Smithereens, Vortex, King Blank, Underground U.S.A., Eraserhead, & Bitter Cane.* There are good & bad 16mm screening facilities, but some, according to Scott B, are among the best he's ever seen. Guests have been known to get stranded without the travel & expenses reimbursement promised, so "make sure all commitments are contracted, says U.S. contact Christiane Roget. According to Roget, if the film is subtitled in Spanish, it will probably get accepted. Programmer Victor Nieto will be traveling to the U.S. for product. Deadline: Jan./Feb. Contact: Christiane Roget, P.O. Box E, Coconut Grove, FL 33133; tel: (305) 937-7411; or Victor Nieto, AA 1834 Cartagena, Colombia; tel: 42 345.

● *HIROSHIMA INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL,* July. Founded in 1975 to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the atomic bombing, the festival welcomes work under 30 minutes in Super-8, 16mm, ¾", VHS & Beta (NTSC) that exemplifies "efforts toward peace & reverence to life." All genres accepted. In 1983 the festival received 208 entries from 24 countries. 1 grand prize, which includes a travel coupon of 500,000 yen, & runners-up will be announced in April. Winning films will travel & be shown on Japanese TV, & may be used by UNESCO. Include postage for film with application (available at AIVF—send SASE). Deadline: Jan. 31. Films due: Feb. 28. Contact: Chugoku Broadcasting C., Cultural Dept. Business Div., 21-3 Motomachi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima City, Japan 730; tel: 082 233 1111.

● *INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF AUTHOR FILMS,* March 28-April 2. Feature length "auteur" films are the subject of this festival. Screenplay must be written at least in part by the director. Documentaries & narratives not released in Europe eligible. Grand Prize: 5 million lire. Deadline for forms (available at AIVF—send SASE): Jan. 30. 12-line synopsis, dialogue list, cast list, 13"×18" b&w still, & directors "biofilmography" should be included with entry form. Deadline for film: March 10. Producer pays shipping. Contact: Nino Zucchelli or Nestorio Sacchi, Mostra Internazionale Del Film D'Autore, Rotonda dei Mille, 1 Bergamo, Italy; tel: 243.566 or 234.162.

● *MOOMBA INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR SUPER-8 AND 8MM FILM FESTIVAL,* March 1-14. 39th annual festival for non-commercial "Films on 8." Includes student category; prefers films under 30 minutes. Competition awards prizes worth up to $1,000. Entry fee: $2 per film. Deadline: Feb. 15 (forms available at AIVF—send SASE). Contact: The Competition Secretary, Australia's Ten Best on Eight, 12-14 Tannock Street, North Balwyn, Vic. 3104, Australia.

● *MURCIA INTERNATIONAL CONTEST OF SHORT FILMS,* April 17-26. Last year's 31st Spanish short film endeavor featured 19 U.S. films. Prizes for Super-8 & 16mm narratives, documentaries & animated films are 75,000, 40,000 and 20,000 pesetas, with certificates for all participants. Entry forms available from AIVF (send SASE). Festival pays return shipping. Deadline: March 1. Contact: Catedra de Cinmatografia de la Caja de Ahorros de Alicante y Murcia, Centro Cultural, Salzillo 7, Murcia, Spain; tel: 968 21 77 51 (mornings only). Festival pays return shipping.

● *STRASBOURG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS,* March 12-19. This French festival, in its 13th year, features films which deal with "human dignity & the violation of fundamental rights." Films entered must be less than 2 years old & unreleased in France. 16 & 35mm accepted; subtitles requested. All lengths & genres, should be accompanied by entry forms, synopsis, filmography of the director, "an expose by the director stating his reasons for producing the film & the goals of the film," & press materials. Festival is seeking more U.S. product. They pay return shipping. Cassettes, any format, accepted for preselection. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: The International Institute of Human Rights, 1 quai Lezay-Marnesia, 67000 Strasbourg, France; tel: 88 35 05 50.

IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION

Mary Guzzy



"Diggers," Roman Foster's 90-minute documentary about the 100,000 black men who built the Panama Canal, will be broadcast nationally on PBS in February. Above, an archival photo of a West Indian laborer's house. Most of the workers came from Barbados and Jamaica, and were paid ten cents per hour. Thirty thousand men died building the canal; some of the survivors, all over the age of 90, appear in the film.



All photos courtesy filmmakers

Doris Chase, a pioneer in the development of the field of video dance, has departed from that genre to produce a half-hour pilot for a series of dramatic video monologues featuring mature actresses. Pictured above is Geraldine Page performing "Table for One," a portrait of a recently divorced woman eating alone in a restaurant, with an original score by Michael Caufield.



Life is the pits for Vietnam vet Frankie Dunlan (Rick Giovinazzo) in Buddy Giovinazzo's feature film, "American Nightmares," recently screened at the 1984 Independent Feature Market in New York. Staten Island is the appropriately ghastly setting for this horror story of a war survivor. First-time cinematographer Stella Varveris filmed the landscape with an eye for its surreal qualities.

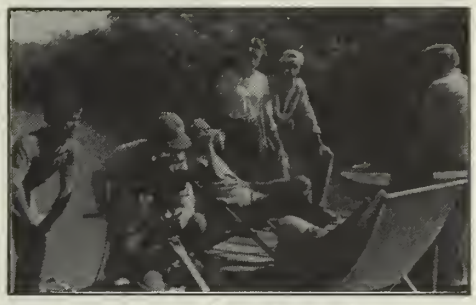




Dancers perform "And One And One And One," produced by video artist Helen DeMichiel and choreographer Laurie Van Wieren. The 25-minute adaptation of three plays by Gertrude Stein combines dance, movement, music and sound in a "post-modern feminist interpretation."



Actor Phillip Baker Hall portrays Richard M. Nixon in Robert Altman's independent feature, "Secret Honor," which will open in New York this winter. Filmed entirely at the University of Michigan with a student crew, "Secret Honor" is distributed by Altman's Sandcastle 5 Productions.



Cameraperson Ed Bowes zooms in for a close-up of actor Jack Sheedy during production of Matthew Geller's video feature, "Everglades City," while cast members Aaron Mitchell (far right), Anna Castleman and David S. Bjornson look on. Loosely based on the fairy tale "Beauty and the Beast," the tape was shot in southwestern Florida.



Poet and performance artist Vincent Pollard of Chicago performs his "Distant Thunder/ Unseen Lightning." The piece explores the toll unemployment and foreign wars have taken on American working class communities. Above: one of Pollard's transparencies used in the performance.

Two steelworkers on the job, from "Labor Day" by Allen Tobias.



Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others included as space permits. Send Notices to: Mary Guzzy, **THE INDEPENDENT**, c/o FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012. For further information, call: (212) 473-3400. Deadline: 8th of second preceding month (e.g., January 8 for the March issue).

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60 min. $7.75 each, 30 min. $4.75 each, 20 min. $3.95 each, 10 min. $2.95 each., Call (718) 843-6839, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* 16mm editing equipment. Zeiss Moviscope Viewer, $150. 2-roll paper tape dispenser, $10. Catozzo guillotine tape splicer, 16mm Maier-Hancock hot splicer, $175. Moviola squawk box with magnetic film reader, $85. Magnasynch 16mm 5-gang synchronizer, $150. 1 set Hollywood rewinds w/extenders, $50. 1000′ split reels, $15 each. Sanyo 15″ b&w computer video monitor, $225. All equipment in good condition These prices or best offer. Contact: Michael Wiese, PO Box 406, Westport, CT 06881; (203) 226-6979.

● *FOR SALE:* Beaulieu 4008Zm2, 50008S, 6008S cameras, Miller tripod, S-8 sound fullcoat sync recorder, mic, equalizers, splicer, 3-gang S-8 synchronizer, sliding mag head, minette viewer rewinds, beeplight, photostart, screen, cables. Many free extras, excellent condition & prices. Call: William, (609) 426-2738, 9am–4pm, NJ.

● *FOR SALE:* IBM Selectric typewriter. Call: (212) 666-6787, NY & leave message.

● *FOR RENT:* JVC/KY 2700 camera package, w/crew & car. $350/day. ¾″ postproduction. Complete production packages from idea to finished product. Contact: Erik Lewis Productions, (718) 851-8672, NY.

● *FOR RENT:* 6-plate Steenbeck for rent in our editing room or can travel to yours. 4-plate Steenbeck for rent or sale. Both machines well-maintained. Call: Chris or Randall, (617) 547-7931, MA.

Conferences ● Workshops

● *LEARN TO ANIMATE ON A MICRO-COMPUTER:* Using moviemaker software, on Atari 800s, create 30–45 sec. 4-color animation w/sound. Moviemaker I covers basics, Moviemaker II goes into production applications for finished pieces. Each course, 6 hrs. instruction, 12 hrs. lab. $175. Call Janet Been, (212) 966-1487, NY, or Computer Arts Form, (212) 586-1261, NY.

● *VIDEO EXPO:* Held in San Francisco's Civic Auditorium, Feb. 11–15. Exhibiting video equipment & technology, seminar program of intensive full-day & half-day sessions. Contact: Shelia Alpher, Knowledge Industry Publications, 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604; call (800) 248-KIPI (toll-free) or (914) 328-9157, NY.

● *ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN RESEARCH ASSOCIATION:* Seeks film, video & slide entries for presentations at international conference in NYC, June 10-12. Film, video or slides about built & natural settings considered. Research films, reportage, cinema verite, interviews, documentaries, fiction, animation, simulation & other forms acceptable. Deadline: Feb. 15, 1985; acceptance by April 15; awards: June 12. Contact: Madeline Gross, EDRA 16/1985, Conference Administrator, Graduate Center/CUNY, 33 W. 42 St., NYC 10036-8099.

● *NEW FILMMAKERS SHOWCASE:* Experimental films shown in monthly screenings. Contact: Collective for Living Cinema, 52 White St., NYC 10013, (212) 925-2111.

● *WINTER WORKSHOPS AT THE COLLECTIVE: Beginning Filmmaking* Feb. 4–March 20, $160. *16mm Basics* Feb. 9, 10, 16 & 17, $90. *Sound Recording* Feb. 23 & 24, $90. *Lighting* March 2, 3 & 9, $90. *Optical Printing,* March 10 & 12, $90. *Editing Techniques* March 16 & 17, $90. Take 3 or more weekend workshops, receive 5% reduction. Members get an additional 10% off. Limited enrollment—register early. Call: (212) 925-3926, NY.

Editing Facilities

● *EDITING ROOM FOR RENT:* 8-plate Steenbeck. 2 rooms fully equipped w/everything including sound transfer. 24-hr. access, convenient downtown location. $900/mo., $250/wk., $60/day; negotiable. Call: Anomaly Films, (212) 925-1500, NY.

● *FOR RENT:* 6-plate Steenbeck editing room. Fully equipped incl. telephone. Special rates for independents. Contact: Bob Mack Prods., (212) 736-3074, NY.

● *OFF LINE ON COST EDITING:* New hi-speed equipment. Fully computerized edit decision, list management w/printout. Rough cuts, clip reels, window dubs, time coding available. Quiet cool editing room; everything $20/hr. contact: Bob Wiegand, (212) 925-6059, NY.

● *EDITING POST:* offers ¾″ editing at $50/hr. w/ editor. System includes JVC CR-8250 recorder w/vertical interval head switching & balanced audio inputs (broadcast standards), Chyron VP-1 graphics, time base correction & full time code capability, including window dubs. Discounts for longer projects. Convenient midtown location; 24-hr., 7-day access. Book time M-F, 10am-6pm. Contact: Gerry Pallor, (212) 757-4220, NY.

● *UPPER WEST SIDE STEENBECK RENTAL:* 8-plate or 6-plate. Reasonable rates. Call: (212) 874-7444, NY.

● *STEENBECKS FOR RENT:* Moderately priced by the month. Delivered to your workspace. Prompt repairs included. Call: Paul, (212) 316-2913, NY.

● *MOVIOLA M-77s FOR RENT:* $500/mo. in your workspace. 15% discount to AIVF members. Contact: Philmaster Productions, (212) 873-4470, NY.

● *SONY BVU ¾″ EDITING:* Flexible rates w/editor. $25/hr. w/ editor. Call: (212) 242-2320, NY.

● *VIDEO EDITING & TIME CODING:* ¾″ hi-speed video editing on new JVC 8250 w/convergence control. $20/$30/hr. Low rates for time coding & time code editing. Contact: Inpoint Productions, (212) 679-3172, NY.

● *TEATOWN VIDEO INC.:* Offers new ½″ professional Betacam format, Teatown's CMX-340X on line editing suite, edits directly from Betacam camera originals to 1″ broadcast masters. Call: Teatown Video, (212) 302-0722, NY.

● *WOMENS INTERART CENTER:* Has editing facilities for video & filmmakers. Video facilities include ¾″ Z600C computerized video editing system w/Sony 5850 editing decks. Microloc frame accuracy for precise editing control. Film facilities include 6-plate 16mm Steenbeck w/splicers & editing table, bins, rewinds & reels. Call: (212) 246-1050, 10 am-6 pm for rates & hrs.

● *MIDTOWN MOVIOLA:* Editing room w/breakdown table, shelves, bin, etc. $50/day, $200/wk, $700/mo. Call: (212) 947-5333, NY.

● *EDITING ROOM:* KEM 8-plate Universal editing table, 16mm/35mm, rewinds, bin, splicer. 24 hr. access. Very reasonable. Contact: Women Make Movies, 19 W. 21st., NYC 10010, (212) 929-6477.

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MARK SCHUBIN
The Difference Between Movies and Television
FEBRUARY 4 6:30
ARDELE LISTER
Tailored Truths
MARCH 4 6:30
KEN FEINGOLD
To Intensify Use of Time
MARCH 18 6:30
BOB SNYDER
Video Colorization Based on Musical Modules
APRIL 15 6:30
DOUG HALL
Image As Spectacle Video Works
APRIL 29 6:30
LISA STEELE
Talking Tongues
MAY 6 6:30
PAUL RYAN
Ecochannel for the Hudson Estuary
JUNE 3 6:30
DEEDEE HALLECK
In the Belly of the Beast Encountering the Culture Industry on Public Access Cable
JUNE 24 6:30
ED BOWES
Story, Plot, and Central Crises in Television Narrative

VIDEO VIEWPOINTS is supported in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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● *MACHINE LANGUAGE HAS MOVED TO MIDTOWN:* Non-commercial rates for ¾" editing @$25/hr. w/editor & ½" to ¾" facility. Staff editors offer expertise in new narratives, documentaries, music video & performance. Industrial & broadcast quality production packages available for location shoots. We'll work w/you from start to finish. Contact: Machine Language, 321 W. 44 St., NYC 10036, (212) 431-7731.

Films ● Tapes Wanted

● *TELEPRESS TODAY:* Newspaper channel produced by Binghamton Press Co. seeks ¾" shows on barter basis. Interested in series or longer running shows to air on our LO channel. All programs promoted in our newspapers along w/daily TV logs. Call: Dan Marchese, (607) 798-1200.

● *EDUCATIONAL FILM DISTRIBUTOR:* Seeks film/video titles for national distribution on family relations/parenting: human sexuality, mental health, guidance, career education & substance abuse. Contact: ODN Productions, c/o Sharon Waskow, 74 Varick St., NYC 10013, (212) 431-8923.

Freelancers

● *APPRENTICE/ASSISTANT EDITOR:* Freelancing in Boston. Emerson College grad, 1984. Very organized, willing to work long hours for low pay in exchange for experience. Will relocate. Contact: D. Caruso, 19 Prescott St., Newton MA 02160, (617) 969-6804.

● *EDITING/PRODUCTION/RESEARCH ASST.:* Available to work on films & videos. Varied professional experience in all aspects of film/video production. Interest in independent film/video career. Anthropological field work. Rates negotiable. Contact: Debbie Bergman, (212) 228-3515, NY.

● *ART DIRECTION, SET DRESSING, PROPS:* I would like to help design your production. Reasonable rates. Resume & portfolio available. Contact: Eva, (212) 724-3879, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER AVAILABLE:* For low-budget features. Contact: Felix Parnell, (212) 759-9216, NY.

● *FILM COMPOSER AVAILABLE:* Experience w/ strong classical background; teaching film composing at Manhattan School of Music & School of Visual Arts. Contact: Ed Green, (212) 533-4303, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER:* Specializing in Hispanic subjects, US or Latin America, available for documentary. Fluent in Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, Russian; English OK, too. CP GSMO, lights, sound, editing facilities. Based in Santa Fe. Contact: Pacho Lane, PO Box 266, Cerrillos NM 87010, (505) 982-6800.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER:* W/ 15 yrs. experience in 35mm & 16mm interested in independent fiction films. Fluent in French. Contact: Babette Mangolte, (212) 925-6329, NY.

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● *SYNCHROSOUND PROD:* Offering original music & scoring for films & audio/video production. Heard on cable & national television. We can fit your budget. Contact: Jerry, (212) 505-8500 or John (516) 944-8747, NY.

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● *POSTPRODUCTION CONSULTING:* On all aspects of 16mm or 35mm film. Experienced in solving problems dealing w/opticals, lab procedures, editing, archival footage, soundtracks, etc. Also available to cut A&B rolls & provide assistance in dealing w/lab. Credits include postproduction supervisor of PBS series & editorial & technical consultant to film archives. Call Steve, (212) 624-4142, NY.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER AVAILABLE:* W/state-of-the-art equip. Creative, professional, reasonable, any location, any occasion. Contact: AB Video Productions, (212) 206-8296, NY.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER EX-DANCER:* Specializing in documentation of & collaboration on dance projects. ¾" or ½" production, color camera. Performance: $150; rehearsal: $100 (excluding tape). Contact: Penny Ward Video, (212) 228-1427, NY.

● *SCRIPT SUPERVISOR/CONTINUITY:* Available for independent features. Good references. Contact: Kerry Kirkpatrick, (212) 879-5241, NY.

● *NEGATIVE MATCHING:* 16mm A&B rolling. Reasonable prices for independent low-budget films. references available. Call: Jay Ahgharian, (212) 897-4145, NY.

● *NEGATIVE MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut, scenes pulled for opticals; negative & reversal stocks. Reliable service, reasonable rates. Call: One White Glove, (212) 897-4145, NY.

● *FILM TITLE SERVICE:* Typeset & prepare artwork, $100. Shoot, develop & workprint, $200. Contact: Charlie, (212) 598-9111/982-3014, NY.

● *FILM/VIDEO EDITOR:* 18 yrs. documentary, ethnographic, industrial. Credits include ABC, NBC, WNET, Exxon, Sperry, Time-Life, Xerox. Awards: American Film Festival (Red & Blue Ribbons), Columbia, Dupont (2) & others. Contact: Molly Smollette, (201) 963-7766/7776, NJ.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER:* W/16 & Super 16mm Aaton package, available for low-budget high quality 16 & 35mm features. Contact: Igor, (212) 794-2011, NY.

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● *RESPONSIBLE VIDEO/CAMERMAN:* For overseas filming (travelogue style), Some experience working overseas helpful. Call: On/Track Video, (212) 864-5166, NY.

● *WANTED:* Experienced independent producer to line produce a feature. Contact: James Adler, Franco Productions, PO Box 252, Prince Station, NYC 10012.

● *FILM/VIDEO CHAIRPERSON:* School of Photographic Arts & Sciences of Rochester Institute of Technology has reopened its search for chairperson for Film/Video Department. Candidate should have record of academic, professional & administrative experience in video/filmmaking, & master's degree. Responsibilities include teaching & administration in small, growing undergraduate film & video program. Salary & rank commensurate w/qualifications. Equal opportunity employer. Deadline: Jan. 8, 1985. Contact: Professor Thomas Iten, Acting Director, School of Photographic Arts & Sciences, Rochester Institute of Technology, One Lomb Memorial Drive, Rochester, NY 14623.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER WANTED:* Small, non-profit social issues film company w/ flatbed & Nagra seeks competent cinematographer w/ equipment interested in 1-yr. partnership in Alaska, beginning April 1985. Must be willing to generate projects as well as become involved in company's other functions. Contact: Affinity Films, PO Box 102974, Anchorage, AK 99510.

● *WANTED:* Video personnel: Camera operator/editor of ability to maintain equip. & trouble-shoot when necessary. Sound person/deck operator/technical assistant w/artistic skills. References & resumes required. Reel required for camera position. Paid positions for capable, talented, responsible & experienced individuals. Contact: Gary Beck, Sidewalks of NY Prods, PO Box 968, Old Chelsea Sta., NYC 10113.

● *FACULTY POSITION 1985-86:* Primary responsibilities in film/video w/additional experience in visual anthropology, mass communications & society, or new technologies preferred. Responsibilities include: teaching basic & intermedia video/film production technologies: aesthetic, ideological & historical perspectives on visual communications in an interdisciplinary teaching context. Evidence of ongoing personal work required. Send example of film or videotape w/application. Deadline: Jan. 6, 1985. To apply send resume, 2 letters of recommendation from college & 2 letters from students & any standardized teaching evaluation forms available plus a statement of educational philosophy & a syllabus exhibiting your approach to teaching. Contact: Barbara Leigh Smith, Academic Dean, Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA 98505.

● *FUNDRAISING COORDINATOR:* Work w/staff in coordinating annual fundraising effort for non-profit center in involved in film, video, theater, recording, radio, facility programming & photography. Qualifications: good verbal & writing skills; knowledge of multiple media disciplines; willingness to

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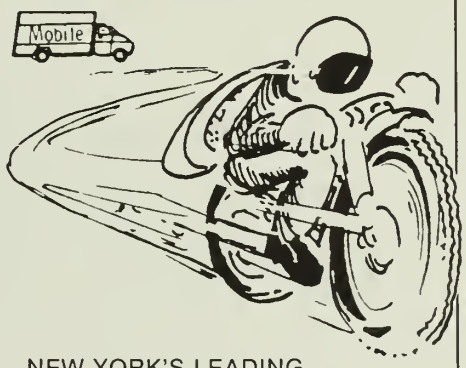
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● *DANCE/COMEDY/ADVENTURE:* Experienced film producer seeks screenplay. All properties professionally executed & held in strict confidence. Contact: (212) 523-3005, NY.

● *WANTED TO FILM OR TAPE IN NICARAGUA:* Vecino Brigade, group of builders & organizers, will depart for Nicaragua late March 1985, to constuct a health clinic/daycare center. Looking for bilingual professionals to document this project. Must finance own travel expenses & help raise money for the media project. Contact: Kendall Hale, 121 Fisher Ave., Roxbury, MA 02120; (617) 731-1590.

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● *APPALSHOP:* Will administer Southeast Media Fellowship Program. Independent film & videomakers in AL, FL, GA, KY, LS, MS, NC, SC, TN & VA are eligible to apply for production grants of up to $5,000 for new works or works-in-progress. Deadline: Feb. 1, 1985; grant awards announced by March 20. Contact: Southeast Media Fellowship Program, SEMFP c/o Appalshop, Box 743, Whitesburg, KY 41858; (606) 633-0108.

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1985. Contact: Prof. John Douglass, School of Communication, American University, Washington, DC 20016.

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MARCH 1985
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 2

Publisher: Lawrence Sapadin
Editor: Martha Gever
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Marianette, Inc.
(718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBaer
113 E. Center St.,
Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeeza Typagraphy
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Faundatian far Independent Videa and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Flaar, New Yark, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a natfar-profit, tax-exempt educational faundatian dedicated ta the promatian af videa and film, and by the Associatian af Independent Videa and Filmmakers, Inc. (AIVF), the natianal trade assaciatian af independent producers and individuals invalved in independent videa and film. Subscriptian is included with membership in AIVF. Together FIVF and AIVF pravide a broad range af educatianal and prafessianal services far independents and the general public. Publicatian af **The Independent** is made passible in part with public funds fram the New Yark State Cauncil an the Arts and the Natianal Endawment far the Arts, a federal agency.

The Independent welcames unsalicited manuscripts. Manuscripts cannot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelape is included. Na respansibility is assumed far lass ar damage.

Letters ta **The Independent** shauld be addressed ta the editar. Letters may be edited far length.

All cantents are capyright af the Faundatian far Independent Videa and Film, Inc., except where otherwise nated. Reprints require written permissian and acknawledgement af the article's previaus appearance in **The Independent**. ISSN 0731-5198.

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COVER: Dara Birnbaum believes that "the farm and materiality af (videa) intrinsically binds it ta 'mass media' and as such it must reach the masses." Her tape **Remy/Grand Central Trains and Boats and Planes** (1980), which mimics TV advertising, can be cited as an example af the grawing number af videotapes that caurt a mass audience, discussed in Lucinda Furlang's "Getting High Tech: The 'New' Televisian." Photo: Video Data Bank

INSIDE STORY

To the editor:

I want to thank you for an excellent article by Claudia Springer on ethnographic film ["Ethnocentric Circles: A Short History of Ethnographic Film," *The Independent,* December 1984]. At the same time, I'd like to point out one important collection of films—not really an organized movement—that was overlooked in the essay.

In 1970, black anthropologist Delmos Jones published an important essay, "Toward a Native Anthropology," taking to task the traditional colonial assumption that the objective anthropologist must study exotic cultures other than his or her own, arguing instead that the cultural "insider" frequently has access to information that differs from and complements that of the assumed "more objective" outsider. During the 1970s, a large body of American independent films were made from this perspective, most notably the "American ethnic" films that surrounded the bicentennial. But because most of these films did not specifically identify themselves as ethnographic and were usually made by filmmakers without formal anthropological or ethnographic training, they are often overlooked as a body of ethnographic films.

During the same period, however, several centers dedicated themselves to making such "insider" films in a manner consistent with the formal guidelines offered by Karl Heider's *Ethnographic Film.* As a southern filmmaker, I am more familiar with those from the South: Appalshop (*Nature's Way* is an excellent introduction to their work), the Center for Southern Folklore (I would recommend Bill Ferris's *Mississippi Delta Bluesmen: Give My Poor Heart Ease,* to begin with), and the Alabama Film-Makers Co-Op (Greg Killmaster's *Possum O'Possum* is among the best films available on regional storytelling style and humor). Unfortunately, one very good film, Bill Gray's *Let the Spirit Move,* was made outside the context of an institution and is now difficult to obtain.

To cover this whole body of "insider" films adequately would require another essay. But to omit them entirely from an overview essay on ethnographic filmmaking overlooks both the largest body of ethnographic films and the most striking movement in ethnographic filmmaking to occur during the 1970s. They are a necessary addition to Springer's overview, especially in the context of the critique offered by the introductory section of her article.

—Wade Black
St. Paul, MN

SOUTH AFRICA REVISITED

To the editor:

As an independent filmmaker and supporter of anti-apartheid activities, I support Robert Mugge's decision to have *Black Wax* screened in South Africa. His letter [*The Independent,* September 1984] explains his position well, describing the film as information rather than cultural artifact, and questioning whether a boycott of *information* is either intended or desirable. Neither of the letters objecting to his decision [*The Independent,* November 1984] made any attempt to address this question, preferring a simpler arena where all issues are black and white and name-calling supersedes discussion.

I have great respect for the African National Congress, but it should be remembered that while the NAACP has long championed the fight for equality in our own country, their policies were never followed unquestioningly by every activist in that struggle. The question here is not who crosses the picket line, but why and to what effect. *—David Appleby*
Memphis, TN

To the editor:

After reading the comments from Robert Mugge and St. Clair Bourne on the question of whether independent filmmakers should make their works available to be shown in South Africa [*The Independent,* September and November, 1984], I felt compelled to share my thoughts on the subject. First, we have to accept the undeniable fact that no rational person would support the despicable system of apartheid in South Africa. Second, we must recognize that the system exists only because of the power the government is able to wield outside its borders. And third, those outside those borders can either support, ignore, or oppose the system.

I know neither Mugge nor Bourne supports the system. However, Bourne, by refusing to participate in any way in the Durban fesival, left no doubt that he opposes the racist regime, whereas Mugge, by allowing *Black Wax* to be shown there, left himself open to the criticism that anyone who ignores the United Nations's resolutions urging total isolation of South Africa and dismisses adherence to the African National Congress's cultural boycott is supporting apartheid, intentionally or unintentionally.

I respect Mugge's right to choose where he allows his films to be shown, as I do that of any filmmaker, but as executive director of the National Black Programming Consortium, I reject requests to allow any production which I have supported to be shown in South Africa. NBPC turned down several South African offers to purchase productions through this organization. And, because NBPC helped fund the U.S. distribution of *Black Wax* to public television stations, I regret deeply that Mugge has permitted the film inside South Africa's borders.

NBPC's position on showing films in South Africa was arrived at very early. I asked myself two questions: Are black South Africans allowed to produce shows for the Durban festival and other mass communications media, and if not, why not (and why are we less concerned about black South Africans showing their works than we are about showing the works of people outside South Africa)? Would I want a child of mine to grow up in South Africa and have no say as to what he or she sees on television or in theaters, no matter what the content, but always be subjected to seeing only that approved by the child's tormentors?

Moreover, I support the goals of people who oppose such a system wherever it may be. As the United Nations's recognized representative of the majority of people in South Africa, the African National Congress should be consulted concerning the showing of productions and participation in cultural events by those from abroad, not the regime in Pretoria or an entity sanctioned by the regime.

—Mable Haddock
Columbus, OH

PAYING THE PIPER

To the editor:

In her otherwise excellent article on use of music in films and videos ["Name That Tune," *The Independent,* November 1984], Paula Schapp neglects to mention one major issue. If Wheeler Dealer intends to use an existing recording made by a record company which is a signatory to the American Federation of Musicians contract, that record company will, as a condition of obtaining rights to that recording, require Wheeler to make such payments as are necessary to the players on that recording. In the *Light My Fire* example, if the Doors's version is to be used for a theatrical or commercial television picture, Wheeler will, in addition to obtaining the various licenses mentioned, have to pay single session theatrical rates (and pension) to every musician who played at the session during which *Light My Fire* was recorded.

Since the major labels are all signatories to the Federation, this issue is one that must not be overlooked. The Federation, which is in Hollywood, will research the recording in order to help Wheeler determine who gets paid. If Wheeler is planning to use a recording that is more than a few years old, he better give ample time to the Federation—their old records are terrible (the written ones, that is).

—Thomas Bliss
Los Angeles, CA

FRENCH CONNECTIONS

To the editor:

In your roundup of foreign film and video festivals in the November 1984 issue of *The Independent,* the item on Cinema du Reel, in which I was quoted, did not sufficiently stress the importance of the festival. Of the European festivals devoted solely to documentaries, Cinema du Reel has emerged as one of the most important, certainly the most important in France. Marie-Christine de Navacelle, who administers the festival and also serves as the executive producer of the films produced by the Centre Georges Pompidou, favors the work of independents. The festival is well organized, with a large press conference; with a little hustling a filmmaker can meet the leading critics, although it is wise to bring a translator if you don't speak French. Although this is a festival, not a market, people have begun to make some sales to French TV. Also, a great many film and videomakers, scholars, etc. come to the festival from all over Europe, so it is a good place to make contacts. The festival has begun to have some logistical problems because it attracts so many people, but for anyone interested in the European documentary scene, Cinema du Reel is a must.

—William Sloan
librarian, Museum of Modern Art
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HOMEWARD BOUND: INDEPENDENTS ENTER CASSETTE MARKET

Although now immune to so much of the high tech hype, independents remain bullish on home video. The consumer video market is expanding just as the prognosticators promised. This January was a boom month for video stores, as a crush of customers rushed to the cassette shelves, eager to try the VCRs they got for Christmas. Last year, lots of people were talking about staking a claim for independents in the home video gold rush [See Debra Goldman, "Home Video: New Outlet for Indies?" *The Independent,* July/August 1984]. Today, a few are doing it.

Last summer, Michael Pollack and Steve Savage, owners of the two New Video stores in Manhattan, acquired non-exclusive rights to works by 37 film and videomakers, duplicated them in Beta and VHS formats, and launched the New Video Independent Series. The line-up, which includes such names as Eric Mitchell, Sarah Driver, Jim Jarmusch, and Mitchell Kriegman, immediately drew the hip and the curious. Six months later some of the tapes were still moving briskly.

New Video paid for transfers and production costs; the producers helped put together graphics for the cassette covers, giving them, according to Pollack, a "cottage industry look" which only boosts their arty cachet. New Video pockets the revenues until its investment is recouped; any earnings above that are split 50–50 between the store and the producer. After the first accounting of receipts for the series in mid-January, Pollack reports that six tapes had broken even. Although the partners are unlikely to dump their stock of Hollywood blockbusters and porn tapes on the strength of these returns, the results are encouraging enough to reinforce their desire to expand the series to 100 titles by the end of this year.

Savage and Pollack deliberately created the Independent Series as a collaboration between the stores, the producers (all based in New York) and the sizable community of knowledgeable film buffs that surrounds them. Most of the producers eager to join the series are also from the city. New Video was recently contacted by a producer from Portland, and, if he were to become part of the series, Pollack says, "We would hope that video stores in Portland would be as supportive of the work as we try to be here."

Because, so far, the word-of-mouth urban nexus has been a key to success, Pollack was cautious about expanding the series' geographical market too rapidly. By special arrangement, a few tapes have gone out by mail, and the store fields inquiries from retailers in other parts of the country; but except for a few stores in California, the partners have refused most of them. "We wouldn't want the tapes to go to retailers who didn't understand what this work is all about. They wouldn't know how to handle it, and it would create a bad precedent. Selling these tapes is one of those inch-by-inch kind of battles." Their hope, however, is that eventually they will be able to develop relationships with a nationwide network of stores that will handle the series in the right way.

While New Video's experimental independent home video concentrates on a distinctive community in a distinctive locale, the Home Film Festival, a project of filmmakers Dan and Mark Jury, takes the opposite approach. It is aimed at people who live in the "wrong places": towns and suburbs served only by mall triplexes stocked with Hollywood films. Although the brothers do their filmmaking work in New York, they themselves live in a wrong place—Scranton, Pennsylvania. They rarely get to see the films they want to see, and they figured there were others out there like them. In September, after some number crunching, a large investment in computer hard- and software, and the enlistment of the programming services of film critic Rob Edelman, they initiated the festival: a nationwide mail order video rental club that caters to film buffs with art house tastes.

More than 300 films are available, including independent features and documentaries, recent and classic foreign films, cult films, limited release Hollywood features, children's films, and performance films. Membership in the club is $25 the first year and $20 thereafter. Rentals are more expensive than in conventional video stores: six dollars for three days of one cassette, $11 for two, plus two-way postage via UPS or the mail (there is a toll-free number for ordering).

Apparently, people who cannot see these kinds of films any other way consider the club a bargain. Membership, says Mark Jury, is "growing geometrically. The first month we had 10 members, and the next we had 100. And it continues to grow at that pace." The festival survived an early unsuccessful attempt at marketing by direct mail. "It was a bust. We sent out 17,000 pieces and got six replies. The percentages didn't even show up on our calculator." But advertisements, press attention, and word-of-mouth support from personalities like public-television-turned-syndication star Roger Ebert of *At the Movies* have generated so much interest that the festival is already making enough to cover day-to-day operating expenses.

In light of what the Jurys have learned about their members through phone conversations, it is not surprising that conventional mailing lists could not find them. Their members are not only geographically widespread, but a significant percentage live in remote parts of the country, and, at least until the Home Film Festival, played no part in the entertainment media marketplace. Many live miles from the nearest movie theater. Some who called to inquire about the club did not own VCRs. The festival even heard from three or four people who did not own televisions. Given the fact that well over 90 percent of U.S. households possess at least one television set, it is clear that the Jurys have tapped a rather obscure corner of the media market.

The Jurys also learned that members tend to be bookish; they are readers who stay in touch with the culture through magazines and newspapers. Thus, where direct mail failed, ads in film journals like *American Film* and *Film Comment* have had considerable impact. In most cases, Jury claims, the members "have read about these films. They know the subjects, the plots, the characters. They know everything about them. They just can't see them."

Yet because members are guided by the attention of the press, the Home Film Festival is for now limited to films which have some name recognition, at least in sophisticated filmgoer circles. Theatrical releases and the reviewers' blurbs that go with them are a must. Foreign films are often the best known titles offered, and they make up the bulk of the rentals (seven of the eight top-renting cassettes are from abroad). *Berlin Alexanderplatz,* for example, which rents for $30 per week, is reserved through the end of this year. The single most popular tape, however, is the domestic feature *El Norte.* Among the other independent productions which Jury described as doing well are John Sayles's films, *Burden of Dreams, The Atomic Cafe,* and *Harlan County USA.* For the most part, he says, independents do better than limited-release Hollywood movies.

Jury was not quite ready to label the Home Film Festival a success. He says, "When we went

into this, we wanted it to look like we meant business," and it will take years to earn back the hundreds of thousands of dollars it cost to renovate their business headquarters in Scranton, start up the computer, and produce the up-scale membership packet. "It looks like it will work," he says. "We'll just have to see how big it gets."

Both the Jurys and Pollack and Savage question whether Mark Rappaport could do as well as John Sayles in Hawk Village, Vermont. The two ventures remain distinct approaches toward integrating independents into the home video revolution. While New Video is splitting the profits with its producer "partners," the festival, like a conventional video store, buys its cassettes outright and keeps the rental income. New Video cultivates an already established audience in a new way; the festival uncovers new audiences. Finally, for independents to make it big as part of the New Video series or some equivalent, the made-for-home-video market will have to expand, while to be successful in a set-up like the Home Film Festival, independents must first break the recognition barrier in a theatrical release.

As a commodity, home video is a contradiction. On its face, it is just another form of mass distribution, and both the enthusiasm and fear it generates in the entertainment industry stem from its potential for volume sales. Yet more than any other media product, home video individualizes the consumer: in theory at least, a producer's work need not have mass appeal if, through cassette, it can reach the more specialized audience that will appreciate it. It is this characteristic which makes home video so attractive to independents, and which both these ventures hope to exploit. *—Debra Goldman*

CPB'S QUOTA "EXPERIMENT"

Ron Hull, director of CPB's Program Fund, dropped a small bombshell on the conference table when Program Fund staffers met with representatives of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers in late November. He was fresh from the PBS Program Fair in Seattle, where public television stations buy—or do not buy—CPB-funded programming, and the coalition had heard rumors that while at the fair, Hull had announced his intention to assign four seats on the nine-member Open Solicitation panel to station representatives. Hull's confirmation of that decision before the coalition was not an auspicious opening to the second meeting between independent producer reps and CPB, which are designed to address independents' concerns within public broadcasting.

Confronted with this *fait accompli,* the coalition responded with predictable outrage. The stations already have total discretion over 60 percent of federal funding for public television. The Program Fund and its panel process were created by statute in 1978 precisely to counterbalance station influence, open PTV to outside resources, and encourage more programming risks by the stations. Since few stations have any experience working with small independents, the coalition fears that panels from within the system will, on the one hand, prefer safe programming that is likely to sit well with the folks at home and, on the other, be attracted to the larger, semi-commercial independents with whom they are more familiar.

Only last March, the CPB board vetoed an agreement between independents and the Program Fund to set aside a certain percentage of supplemental production dollars for independently produced programming. At that time the board declared its fundamental opposition to any kind of "set asides" and invoked its right to exercise complete discretion over all aspects of CPB business. Coalition reps argued that Hull's new panel policy was at odds with existing board policy.

Superficially, the new strategy makes a certain amount of sense for CPB. With a White House that seems to regard CPB as little more than a sinkhole in the federal budget, there cannot help but be a little anxiety at the Corporation about improving its track record with the stations. As Hull argued, the stations are CPB's "consumers," and by increasing their participation in the programming process at its source, CPB is more likely to produce works that the stations will actually air. Unwittingly, however, Hull may have given ammunition to those within the public television system who are not admirers of CPB or its Program Fund. For if it is so desirable to increase the stations' discretion over program dollars, they may well ask: Why have the Program Fund at all? Why not bypass the Washington middlemen altogether, and give the money directly to the stations?

Hull's additional argument—that the station representatives would not vote as a bloc, but as "individuals"—struck the coalition as disingenuous. "Wrongheaded" was their label for his assertion that the "independent cause will be best served" by the presence of station personnel because the panel will provide an opportunity for stations to learn about independents and the kinds of work they produce. Station personnel may well need educating, but the panel that decides who gets the production dollars hardly seems the place to do it.

"It would be one thing," coalition member Jeffrey Chester of California told *Broadcasting* magazine, "if Hull said, 'Okay, there'll be four station people, four independents and one expert.' But he's only willing to do it for the stations." The new policy may also shortcircuit a small but significant trend toward station-independent co-productions which has emerged in the past few years, thanks to the belief among

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stations that the presence of an independent in the production package boosted a proposal's chances with the panel.

At the November meeting, Hull stood firm on his new panel policy despite coalition protests. But perhaps as a result of the coalition's success in attracting the press's attention to the dispute, he has subsequently softened his position. At an FIVF-sponsored CPB outreach seminar in December, Hull decribed the station quota as an "experiment" which will be tested over the next two rounds of panels. "We'll see how it works and then we'll review it," he said.

Despite the flap over the panel, the November meeting did yield some positive results, specifically regarding promotion of independent programming, which has traditionally been a sore point for independents. While at one time CPB reserved a small percentage of its budget for promotion, these days such funds go directly to the stations, for use at their own discretion; the result is that there is often "no money" to promote independent work. At the meeting, CPB and the coalition agreed in principle that funds need to be available for promotion of independent and minority work, although no specific formula was reached. Since the coalition rejected CPB's suggestion that such money be sliced from the production pie, both sides are attempting to develop options through appointed liaison representatives.

The next meeting between CPB and the coalition will be held at the end of this month. In terms of its own development, the coalition's strategy is to get more producers involved in its work at the local level. In its brief history, this *ad hoc* national group has succeeded in introducing into the Program Fund's agenda concerns which otherwise would not be there. As Lawrence Sapadin, AIVF executive director and spokesperson for the coalition, reported in a letter to coalition members, "[We have] demonstrated to CPB that we will not go away." —*DG*

LOW TIDE FOR LONG BEACH VIDEO?

In January, the Long Beach Museum of Art (LBMA) completed a major retrospective representing 10 years of its video programs. Under the guidance of curators David Ross, Nancy Drew and Kathy Huffman, the video program has achieved international stature for its exhibitions, archives and production/postproduction annex. But even as the video program celebrated its first decade as a leader in museum-based video, there was speculation that the video program is in danger of being abandoned under new museum management.

Is the news of impending death greatly exaggerated? According to museum staff and board members, yes. The video program is continuing business as usual, and even expanding. A major catalogue has just been completed for the retrospective, all funding and plans for 1985 are in place, and the Video Annex is in the process of building a new production studio and control room. Says assistant curator Connie Fitzsimmons, "The program is an important part of the institution, and will continue to be."

"I don't know how the rumors started and when they're going to end," adds Fitzsimmons, "but they're not doing the program any good." Fitzsimmons has been co-directing the program with Kira Perov since Huffman left the museum in May for a job at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art. Yet a cloud of uncertainty has continued to hang over the program, fueled by confusion over new developments at LBMA, including the museum administration's failure to hire a replacement for Huffman.

At the root of the confusion is a museum-wide adminstrative transition. LBMA is currently operated by the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Long Beach, with Greg Devereaux, the city's superintendent of cultural services, as acting director. Last year the LBMA Foundation—a constellation of volunteer support and fundraising groups—proposed to take over management of the museum. According to Devereaux, the foundation will assume control, provided it can raise $300,000 and present a satisfactory development plan to the city by June 30; until then, hiring has been frozen.

Spearheading the transition effort is the foundation's new executive director, Stephen Garrett, hired in the fall of 1984. Garrett's arrival on the scene raised much of the speculation regarding the video program's future. Formerly the director of the Getty Museum—a few miles up the Pacific Coast in Malibu—Garrett has little or no background in video art, although he will become head of the museum if and when the foundation assumes management.

Garrett attended the LBMA retrospective and the American Film Institute's National Video Festival to acquaint himself with the medium, but whether that has made him a convert remains to be seen. Says Garrett, "Video art is clearly an alive, interesting, vital form of contemporary art. There would be absolutely no question in my mind that video should never be shown at the Long Beach Museum of Art—that would be a ridiculous position to take. The degree to which the museum will exhibit or produce video is the question." For example, Garrett regards the museum's video annex as somewhat problematic in view of the institution's curatorial interests. The annex is a rare bird in the universe of museums—a creative unit that actually produces and facilitates the production of works of art. Garrett wonders if the annex could result in a "conflict of judgment" for curators, who would theoretically be asked to choose between works of both in-house and unaffiliated artists.

Will the video program stay at LBMA? While Garrett voices his unequivocal support and acknowledges its success, he added, "There is no question in any way of killing the video program. But the question in my mind is whether or not it would flourish better under this museum or another institution." The foundation's board president, Jennifer Cameron, is more committal. "Anything is possible," she says, "but video is one of our strongest programs. If we take over the management of the museum, we plan to maintain and expand *all* of our programs." According to Cameron, the board has pushed the city to hire a new curator to replace Huffman and hopes the position will be filled by spring.

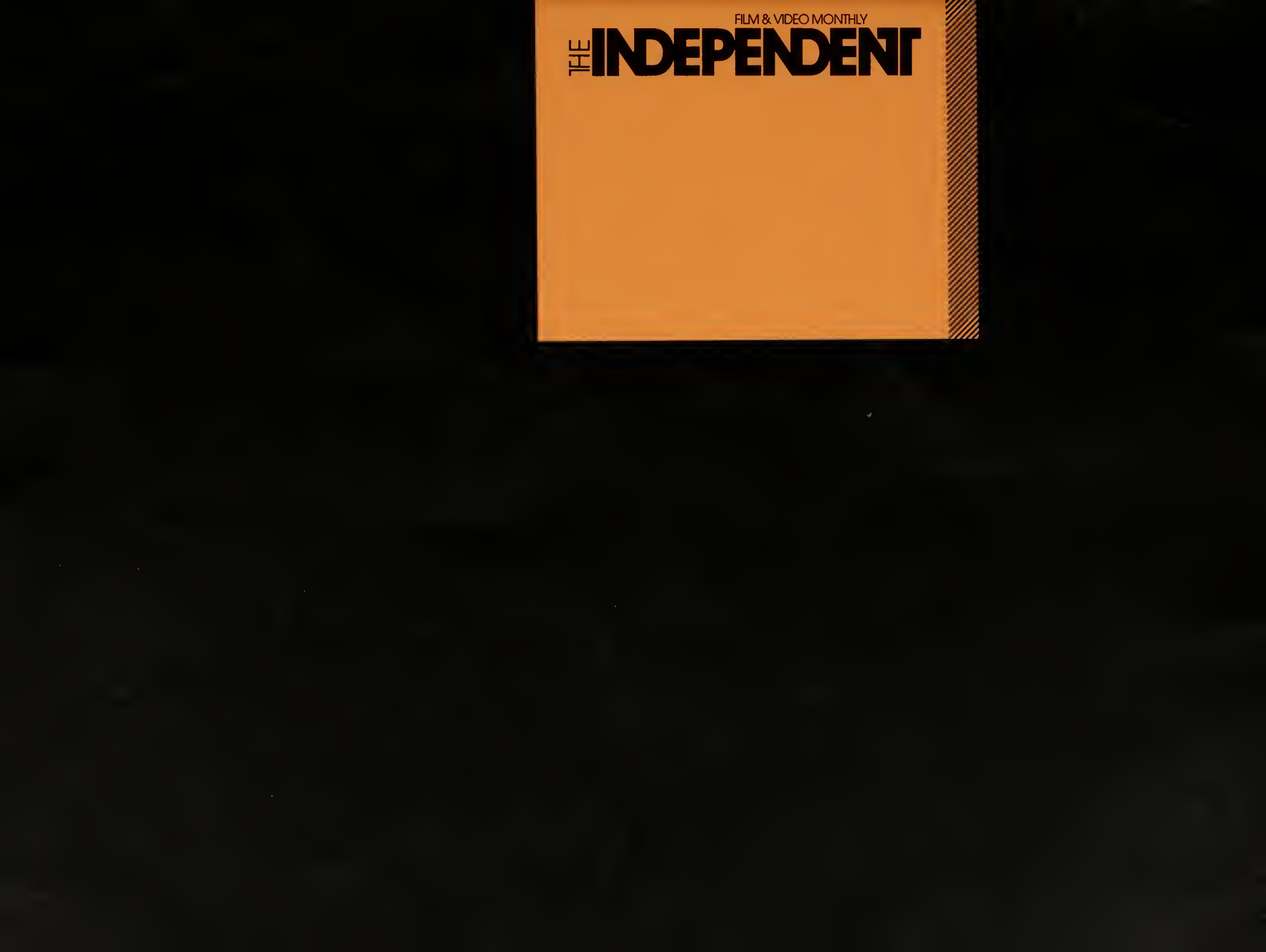
The museum's administrative future remains the board's dominant concern at the moment. Says Patrick Scott, president of the 80-odd member Video Council and its representative on the board, "The board is involved in heavy-duty fundraising right now." Even if the foundation assumes administrative control of the museum by June, there would be lengthy discussions before any programming changes could be made, Garrett points out. And no administration would, presumably, overlook the world-class prestige the video program has attained.

—*Renee Tajima*

NEA BUDGET ROUGH CUT

With staggering national deficits occupying those who oversee federal expenditures, no one could register much surprise when, in mid-January, a proposal for an 11.7 percent cut in the 1986 budget for the National Endowment for the Arts was leaked to the press. In a front page story, the *New York Times* detailed the specific reductions in various NEA programs this would entail; the Media Arts Program would be cut 7.8 percent, receiving $9.4-million compared to $10.2-million in 1985. Under the plan, funding for all other NEA programs would drop considerably, while the budget for "policy, planning and research" would be boosted 7.1 percent, reaching approximately $1.1-million.

Officials at both the NEA and the Office of Management and Budget denied having given this information to the *Times* and refused to answer questions on the subject. Nevertheless, Larry Speakes, President Reagan's press secretary, acknowledged, "The story in the *Times* is generally accurate." Rhoda Glickman, executive director of the Congressional Arts Caucus, a bipartisan group of 176 federal legislators, said that the figures had been confirmed by the White House staff, adding that earlier rumors concerning OMB's requests for the 1986 NEA allocation projected only a three to four percent cut. Still, as executive director of the American Arts Alliance Anne Murphy pointed out, the $144.5-million budget proposal cited in the *Times* represents a slight increase over the 1985 administration request. And every year since 1981 Congress has


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appropriated significantly more money for the NEA than the White House recommends. Last year, $143.8-million was requested and $163.7-million appropriated.

Several factors may affect this pattern, however, when 1986 budget decisions are made. Most obvious is the deficit consciousness presently inflecting all discussion of future federal spending. Murphy and Glickman both noted the modest size of the NEA budget relative to most other government programs (0.19 percent of the total figure). Glickman commented that, faced with bipartisan support for the arts, the White House "would find it hard to justify such cuts, when a large increase in defense spending is also being considered." A more probable scenario, in her view, is an item-by-item or overall budget freeze. "Members are not going to let the arts be singled out for deeper cuts," she said.

Politics could also enter into the decisions concerning NEA's fiscal fate. The Reagan philosophy regarding arts funding (and domestic programs in general) has proposed replacing federal support with private philanthropy. But, during Reagan's first term, this strategy has not proved adequate. According to Murphy, "Corporate funding of the arts is down and expenses are up." Yet, even among those designated to chart the direction of federal arts policy and its administration, antipathy to public support for the arts is becoming more pronounced. Samuel Lipman, music critic for *Commentary,* publisher of the neoconservative *New Criterion,* and a Reagan appointee to the National Council on the Arts, has emerged as a spokesperson for this position, regularly denouncing the performance of the NEA and questioning its viability. And in the November 1984 issue of the *New Criterion,* he remarked, "[A]s the people lose faith in God and in the state, appropriations for culture and the rhetoric of its advocacy go up like the hottest of hot-air balloons." When interviewed by the *Times* on the proposed NEA budget reductions, Lipman equivocated, instead taking the opportunity to fault the agency's definitions of artistic criteria. Recently, *Commentary* and *New Criterion* writer Joseph Epstein was also appointed to the National Council. During the NEA budget debate, the members of this prominent advisory body will undoubtably be consulted.

OMB's 1986 budget will be finalized and made public in early February, and at some point testimony from various segments of the arts community will be heard by congressional committees. At its January meeting, the board of directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers passed a resolution opposing cuts in the Endowment's budget. The American Arts Alliance and other advocacy groups, including AIVF, will lobby strongly against the White House recommendations, and Glickman said she's "optimistic that Congress will treat the arts fairly." Murphy, too, seemed confident that the NEA appropriation will not suffer drastic cuts in this round. "The White House has given up fighting us on this," she said.

In 1981, in the first months of the Reagan era, appropriations for the arts and humanities endowments became an ideological battle; the Reagan administration tried to curtail federal spending for culture—implementing the strategies laid out in the right-wing Heritage Foundation's report to the Reagan transition team—but they lost. Now, the ideological front has shifted; Murphy believes the next showdown will occur during this congressional session, when Congress considers an authorization bill that enables the Endowments to exist and defines what they can and cannot fund. Given the current political climate and changes at the NEA and NEH during the past four years, cultural policy in the U.S. could be ripe for Reaganite revisions. [The April issue of *The Independent* will describe the authorization process and the Heritage Foundation's recommendations for cultural policy in Reagan's second term.] —*Martha Gever*

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BENNETT MOVES UP THE REAGAN LADDER

President Reagan has announced the nomination of William J. Bennett, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, as Secretary of Education, to replace T.H. Bell, who left the post last December. According to the *New York Times* [January 11, 1985], White House spokesman Larry Speakes said the President simultaneously asked Bennett, upon confirmation by the Senate, to study the feasibility of eliminating the Education Department. No successor to Bennett has been named.

Reaction among educators to the Bennett nomination has been mixed—with both praise and criticism centering on Bennett's emphasis, as NEH chair, on classical humanism ("masterworks") and his centralized administrative style. American Federation of Teachers president Albert Shanker was quoted in the *New York Times* as saying, "Bill Bennett has the qualifications to be an outstanding Secretary of Education because he. . . believes that American classrooms ought to be about reading great works and thinking. . . about the. . . enduring values of our civilization." Samuel R. Gammon, executive director of the American Historical Association, told *The Independent,* "Personally, I'm delighted," and added, "Historians generally have been extremely pleased with [Bennett's] emphasis on restoring humanities to their basic place in the curriculum."

In fact, Bennett's tenure as Endowment chair has met with a decidedly mixed reaction from the academic community. At its annual meeting in December, the AHA council voted to request a meeting with Bennett to discuss NEH grants. "There was concern that under [Bennett's] leadership the Endowment had become unfriendly to what we call the 'newer historical fields'—women's history, black history, social history," explains Richard Kirkendall, Henry A. Wallace professor at Iowa State University/Ames and vice-president of the AHA's professional division.

Mary Beth Norton, professor of history at Cornell University and vice-president for research of the AHA, says Bennett is in some respects a good choice for Secretary of Education because "he has made education one of his major concerns at the Endowment, and has emphasized the central importance of the humanities, which is especially important today, when students are extremely oriented toward careers." But, she adds, "My quarrel with him is in the *way* he's defined the humanities: the study of great white men who died at least 200 years ago." Norman Birnbaum, University Professor at the Georgetown University Law Center, adds, "Bennett's strength [as NEH chair] was also his weakness: his strong attention to the notion of tradition and culture. But this narrowed his perspective and blinded, or at least hindered, his realization that tradition has to be continually renewed." Birnbaum speculates that, as Secretary of Education, "there's a danger that in following his own notion of culture, Bennett might find himself with allies among the yahoos, the back-to-basics, which is to some extent a cover for the fear that kids might learn something at school that their parents don't tell them."

Bennett's administrative style has also been questioned. Norton, a member of the NEH's National Council on the Humanities from 1978–1984, says that, under Bennett, the NEH "very definitely" became more centralized and less receptive to peer panel recommendations. "In many ways, Bennett circumvented the peer review process, both to further his views and to favor cronies of his—which is really reprehensible," Norton says. "That's a question I would have about him as Secretary of Education—his disregard for proper procedure, which made him in many ways not a good administrator." Gerhard L. Weinberg, professor of history at the University of North Carolina/Chapel Hill and former vice-president for research of the AHA, says that while he personally agrees with Bennett's emphasis on masterworks, he disagrees with the "way in which he perceived his role: centralizing initiatives in himself, rather than [supporting] initiatives that came forward from the humanities community." He added, "Oddly enough, this administation had an NEH director who saw in each initiative his vision, his perception, and thought that other concepts should be pushed into the background as much as possible—exactly the opposite of what the administration says is the [decentralized] role of the federal government."

Weinberg also questions Bennett's commitment to federal funding for the humanities. "Bennett invariably supported" Reagan's budgets containing cuts in funds for the NEH, "and Congress almost invariably raised them," he says. "His public posture was not one of advocacy for the humanities within the federal budget." One week after announcing Bennett's nomination as Secretary of Education, the *New York Times* reported that the Reagan Administration plans to ask Congress to reduce NEH funds by 10 percent in the next fiscal year.—*Susan Linfield*

HOLLYWOOD CINEMATHEQUE

The American Cinematheque, a state-of-the-art film, television, and video archive, is scheduled to open in 1987 on the site of the 50-year-old Pan Pacific Auditorium in Los Angeles, which is being remodeled to house a hotel, stores, offices, and the Cinematheque.

According to artistic director Gary Essert, founder and former director of Filmex, the idea

for the center—which is modeled after major film archives such as Henry Langlois's Cinematheque Francaise—has been incubating for six years. Says Essert, "We want to really raise awareness of the moving image art form in the public's mind." The planned facility will include two film theaters, a video theater, and a laboratory facility where new installations and multimedia programs could be created.

The programming fare will be broad, blending classics with foreign and independent works. According to Essert, "There will be over 2,000 programs per year, and independent cinema will comprise a big portion. It's especially important to use this opportunity to expose the work of new talent because we're located in the backyard of the film industry." The staff will originate 50 to 60 percent of the programming; the balance will come from institutions such as the Film Forum, the Kitchen, and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

The Cinematheque is still in the process of raising funds as it awaits completion of renovations on the auditorium. —*RT*

WHO'S WHO ON THE CPB BOARD

•*Richard Brookheiser* (1983–1987). Senior editor, *National Review;* contributor, *American Spectator;* member, Council on Foreign Relations and the Philadelphia Society.

•*Howard D. Gutin* (1984–1989). President and general manager, Southwest Texas Public Broadcasting Council; former career U.S. Army officer; active in Jewish Federation of San Antonio and United Negro College Fund.

•*William Lee Hanley, Jr.* (1984–1987). Head of Hanley Company, clay products and oil exploration firm; partner in Black, Manafort & Stone, political consulting firm; former executive director, Connecticut Reagan-Bush Committee.

•*Lillian Edens Herndon* (1975–1986). Former chair, CPB Board; president, National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

•*Lloyd Kaiser* (1984–1989). President and general manager, Metropolitan Pittsburgh Public Broadcasting; former vice-chair, Public Broadcasting Service.

•*Sonia Landau* (1981–1986). Chair, CPB board; corporate consultant; chair, Women for Reagan-Bush; formerly served on Reagan's National Endowment for the Arts transition team and as executive director, New York State Republican Finance Committee.

•*Harry O'Connor* (1983–1986). Head of O'Connor Creative Services, radio production and marketing firm that handles Reagan's daily radio commentary; founding president, Independent Producers Association.

•*Sharon Percy Rockefeller* (1977–1987). Former chair, CPB Board; member, board of directors of Stanford University, National Women's Political Caucus, the Women's Campaign Fund, and International Council for the Museum of Modern Art.

•*R. Kenneth Towery* (1981–1986). President and founder of Sentinel Corporation, business and political consulting firm; former deputy director, United States Information Agency; former press secretary to Senator John Tower; former assistant to the chancellor, University of Texas system.

•*Howard A. White* (1979–1986). Executive vice-president and general counsel, ITT Communications and Information Services; former general attorney and executive secretary, U.S. Earth Station Ownership Committee; former assistant chief, FCC Common Carrier Bureau. —*RT*

ANDREWS HIRED AT NEA

Richard Andrews has been appointed director of the National Endowment for the Arts's Visual Arts Program, which administers fellowships to visual artists, including videomakers and photographers. Andrews formerly served as the Art in Public Places coordinator for the Seattle Arts Commission. As an artist, he makes sculpture and works on paper.

WHO'S WHERE: NEW MEDIA APPOINTMENTS

Celia Chong, coordinator, Global Village Documentary Center, New York City; *Jewel Curvin,* executive director, Black Filmmaker Foundation, New York City; *Stewart Hodes,* executive director, The Kitchen, New York City; *David Madson,* executive director, Boston Film/Video Foundation; *Robert Hull,* executive director, USA Film Festival, Dallas; *Tony Safford,* director of exhibitions and conferences, Sundance Institute, Park City, Utah; *Linny Stovall,* executive director, the Media Project, Portland, Oregon replacing *Karen Wicker,* now director of the Media Alliance in San Francisco; *Margie Strosser,* exhibitions coordinator, Pittsburgh Filmmakers; *Jay Volk,* operations manager, Pittsburgh Filmmakers; *Richard Brookheiser,* chair of CPB's newly established Missions and Goals Committee. And *Ellen Geiger* has retired as president of the Film Arts Foundation's board of directors.

MOMA DUBBED

The December 19, 1984 issue of *Variety* reported that Mary Lea Bandy, Adrienne Mancia, and Steven Harvey of the Museum of Modern Art film department will be knighted by French Minister of Culture Jack Lang, with Arts and Letters honors. The three were responsible for organizing MOMA's "Rediscovering French Film" series, exhibited during 1981–83.

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THE SCREENS OF SAN FRANCISCO

David Weissman

Video art in the San Francisco area dates back to the late 1960s, when the National Center for Experiments in Television was set up at KQED. In the last four years, however, an explosion of activity has created many new venues for independent work in theaters, art galleries, schools, and nightclubs, such as the Sixteenth Note, the Cinematheque, Capp Street Project, Camerawork, Co-Lab, the New Generic, New Langton Arts, and Kanzaki Lounge.

The oldest screening space in the Bay Area, Video Free America, is still going strong in 1985, continuing the screening series it began in 1978. Last spring, VFA launched a two-week Independent Video Showcase, which included documentaries, animation, dramatic narrative, and dance video by over 50 northern California artists at eight different locations. The showcase then went on tour, stopping at Global Village in New York City and Media Study/Buffalo. A highlight of the festival was Peter Adair's *Stopping History,* an hour-long documentary on civil disobedience at the Lawrence Livermore Nuclear Weapons Laboratory in California. Unfortunately, the showcase proved to be a financial disaster for VFA, turning its regular screening series into an irregular one by the end of the year, but VFA still managed to present well-attended shows of tapes by Peter D'Agostino, John Sanborn, Julia Reichert, and a work-in-progress screening of *The Times of Harvey Milk,* among others.

In February 1984, the Video Gallery, a progeny of the five-year-old San Francisco International Video Festival, opened its doors. Co-founders Wendy Garfield and Steve Agetstein wanted to "create a space that's comfortable to be in"; the result is a pleasant cafe setting which nonetheless allows serious video viewing. Attendance at the Video Gallery's 19 shows last year averaged 82—an impressive accomplishment. In line with Agetstein's plans for "a prestigious situation for professional artists," the gallery presented premieres of work by Juan Downey, Nam June Paik, John Sanborn, Les Levine, Tony Labat, Julia Heyward, and Tony Oursler.

The Video Gallery has also been in the forefront of home video distribution of artists' tapes. In 1983, tapes by Meredith Monk, Dan Reeves, Paik, and Shigeko Kubota were released for national distribution. This year two more tapes featuring work by more than a dozen independent videomakers will go on the market. The California Arts Council is supporting these efforts: it doubled its grant to the gallery for the specific purpose of hiring a new staffperson to promote home video distribution and increase sales of its magazine, *Send* (formerly *Video 80*).

Complementing VFA and the Video Gallery's contribution to the San Francisco video scene is Martin Weber Studio, a showcase for work by up-and-coming young talent, which champions ½" video productions. Programming at Martin Weber is an eclectic mix of performance, narrative, science fiction, and poetic video, punctuated with social criticism. Co-founder Marshall Weber's *In Search of Big Fun* portrays the lost innocence of American tourists who become aware of and involved in the European anti-nuclear movement. Weber's *The Day After: Remix,* which premiered at the gallery (followed by a three-week run at New Langton Arts) critically dissects the famous TV program and panel discussion, using associative editing to make a sardonic point.

Works by Bay Area women Lise Swenson and Gina Lamb indicate other facets of Martin Weber's programming. Swenson's *Twelve Noon* is a gripping mystery, narrated by a young Costa Rican boy, who describes his family's mystical Catholicism. Lamb, a graduate of the San Francisco Art Institute, describes her dramatic videotapes as using "taxidermic animal puppets or masks" to anthropomorphically "exaggerate the absurdity of the human social condition." In *The Widow Maker,* her latest tape screened at Martin Weber, Lamb intercuts shots of a black widow spider wandering around a miniature set with a narrative about a black transsexual bride, adding a chorus of schoolgirls playing cat's cradle, to make a satirical comment on mythical images of woman-as-huntress.

80 Langton, an alternative space founded in the seventies by the San Francisco Art Dealers Association, often included video exhibitions in its programs. Renamed New Langton Arts and relocated on Folsom Street, the gallery now features the only continuous video screenings in the Bay Area. Exhibitions, lasting from one to four weeks, are planned for the rest of the year; the screening room, which seats only about a dozen people, is equipped with tri-standard ½" and ¾" playback decks. According to gallery representative Renny Pritikin, New Langton is looking for all kinds of work except "conventionally structured documentaries and MTV-style music videos."

Last but not least of the major video venues to be reckoned with is the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Recently, interpretive programs assistant Beau Takahara revived video exhibition at the museum, which had been at a low ebb ever since the departure of veteran video curator David Ross in the late seventies. In 1984 Takahara brought the Whitney Biennial Video



From Joanne Kelly's "Emergency Exit," screened at Video Free America, the Bay Area's oldest tape screening space. Courtesy Videomaker

Exhibition to San Francisco and curated "Bay Area Focus: Video Update," which included a world premiere of *Credo,* by San Francisco Art Institute instructor Paul Kos. Unfortunately the museum still has no video department, although video is increasingly being used to interpret painting, sculpture, and photography shows for the museum's visitors. One encouraging sign: in 1985 and 1986, commissioned video installations by Bill Viola and Juan Downey will be on prominent display.

Many Bay Area exhibitors acknowledge the general neglect of work by women and minority artists. The major exception is Video Free America, where tapes by women accounted for more than half of the 1984 exhibition program. The Video Gallery's Agetstein admits to the underrepresentation of minority and women artists in his exhibition program, but he attributes this to a scarcity of nonprofit production facilities in the Bay Area. His assessment may not be fair, however, since several media centers provide low-cost training and equipment. In addition to its screening series, VFA has a wide array of equipment available at modest rates; the Bay Area Video Coalition offers similar services, including workshops, a newsletter, and subsidies for some projects. The efforts of these centers notwithstanding, access to *broadcast quality* equipment and editing facilities remains prohibitively expensive for most producers. Unlike New York City, the high-end production houses in San Francisco have no programs to allow cost-conscious independents access to 1″ editing and digital effects. However, BAVC currently has ¾″ CMX editing and plans to upgrade to 1″ next year. Most of BAVC's subsidized productions, however, are not intended for gallery exhibition.

A growing number of San Francisco artists have taken to ½″ home video production. VFA keeps current with new ½″ production packages and editing systems, available for much lower rates than its broadcast gear. This year Martin Weber Studio will form a separate non-profit media center, Artists Television Access. ATA promises to seek out inexperienced, or economically disadvantaged artists, providing training and access to high-quality ½″ equipment. Partners Weber and Martin are particularly concerned with the absence of accessible video technology in San Francisco's ethnic, working-class neighborhoods.

The East Bay Media Center, located in downtown Berkeley, is another group working on the problem of expanding media access. According to staffer Andrea Torrice, EBMC (formerly named Grassroots Video) was founded in 1979 as a group of "politically aware video producers and community activists." Much of their current activity consists of producing videotapes for nonprofit organizations like National Action Against Rape, Asian Community Mental Health, and Bananas, a child-care referral service. They also sponsor monthy video screenings, and future programs will include works by minority producers and a ½″ video festival.

Listed below are the various video exhibition spaces discussed in this article:

Video Free America, 442 Shotwell, San Francisco, 94110

Video Gallery, 1250 17th St., San Francisco, 94107

Martin Weber Studio, 220 8th St., San Francisco, 94103

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Van Ness at McAllister, San Francisco, 94102

Bay Area Video Coalition, 1111 17th St., San Francisco 94107

East Bay Media Center, 2054 University Ave., No. 203, Berkeley, 94704

The Sixteenth Note, 3160 16th St., San Francisco, 94110

Capp Steet Project, 65 Capp St., San Francisco, 94110

New Generic, 2 Clinton Park, San Francisco, 94103

New Langton Arts, 1246 Folsom St., San Francisco, 94103

Camerawork, 70 12th St., San Francisco, 94103

Co-Lab, 1805 Divisadero St., San Francisco, 94115

Kanzaki Lounge, 1705 Buchanan St., San Francisco, 94115

Cinematheque, 480 Potrero Ave., San Francisco, 94110

David Weissman, office manager of the Bay Area Video Coalition, is an editor and freelance writer living in San Francisco.

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LET'S MAKE A DEAL

Paula R. Schaap

[Author's note: This article is presented only for the purpose of educating the independent filmmaker and is not to be taken as legal advice. Television contracts vary greatly. The independent filmmaker should, therefore, always consult his or her attorney before undertaking any course that may have legal ramifications.]

"I Saw It on the Late Show" may have been a hit song some years back, but it is not the tune that most independent filmmakers are humming. So before Cinema Verite* sets forth to scale the towers of television distribution, she must face some sobering facts. Unfortunately, when it comes to commercial and cable television, Verite faces the old Catch-22: she needs a track record, but it is hard to get on the track. Public television is more accessible to independent producers, but its resources are limited.

Still, there are independent producers who do it: either through co-productions with public or cable stations, selling footage or associate producing with networks, obtaining Corporation for Public Broadcasting grants, or selling completed works to PBS. So let's say Verite has found an outlet for her creative vision. Now she's sitting around with the network bigwigs (here the term "network" means commercial, cable or public television), and they are asking her to sign on the dotted line. The following are some aspects of the contract of which she should be aware.

All television networks require that the producer clear all rights [see Paula R. Schaap, "Media as Property: The Rights Stuff," *The Independent,* September 1984]. For documentaries, that means securing releases. For narrative films, it means acquiring the rights to the screenplay and the underlying work and making sure the appropriate copyrights are registered. All filmmakers must be particularly mindful of music rights clearances [see Paula R. Schaap, "Name That Tune," *The Independent,* November 1984]. Charles Samu, manager of intermissions programming for Home Box Office, said the most common problem he encounters is that music rights have not been cleared; the second most common problem is filmmakers who have adapted a published work and didn't bother to secure the rights to it.

Television contracts always contain warranty clauses, which basically say that if rights problems arise, the producer will be held liable. It will probably be difficult for an independent producer to soften the harsh effects of a warranty clause; the better course is to make sure that rights have been cleared before the project is brought to the negotiating table.

Television contracts generally grant the network an exclusive license to the television rights for a set period of time, which can range from one to three years. Exclusivity does not generally apply to theatrical, non-theatrical, or foreign rights. The filmmaker should be careful, however, to scrutinize the clause that spells out the rights he or she is granting to the network. If a contract includes such vague terms as "other rights" or "additional rights," the filmmaker should ask what they mean. If, for example, the terms refer to videocassettes or foreign releases, the filmmaker must decide whether she wants to retain those rights; if she is willing to relinquish them to the network, she should realize that such rights could be used as bargaining chips to acquire higher fees or greater artistic control. If the network is unwilling to define these terms, these words should be removed from the contract.

Artistic control is an issue that surfaces during contract negotiations and it often continues during the making of the film. John Else is a partner in Else, Couterie and Corty, a California film company that produced *Who Are the DeBolts?,* which was picked up by ABC. He suggests that the subject of the film be made part of the contract, and that it be defined as specifically as possible. "Otherwise, you may find that while you thought you were doing one film, the network thought you were doing another."

The filmmaker may still find that she cannot shape the final product because the network almost always retains final cut. Usually, the network will require check-points during production, and these will be specified in the contract. For example, the network will often retain rights of approval over selected rushes, rough cuts, and fine cuts, as well as the final print.

There are additional pressures on commercial and cable networks and, therefore, on producers who work with them. For instance, Else produced a film for ABC on the wheat harvest, which he conceived as a character study of men who follow the harvest through America's heartland. By the time it was finished, however, the news climate had changed. "Suddenly, agricultural news and farm foreclosures were front-page news," Else said. ABC reshot and reedited the film because it wanted a hard-hitting investigative report in keeping with current events, rather



Producer John Else struck a compromise with Home Box Office to reconcile his vision of the program "Stepping Out" with that of the network. Courtesy Home Box Office

*Readers of past columns may remember one Wheeler Dealer, the male counterpart of Cinema Verite. I'm happy to report that Wheeler Dealer is on staff at a major studio. This means that he no longer qualifies as an independent producer, so, until the studio changes hands, he won't be with us.

than a human interest story. On the other hand, Else pointed out that he worked with ABC on two other documentaries, *Vietnam Requiem* and *Can't It Be Anyone Else?,* and major artistic control was left in his hands.

HBO and Else also had a different conception of *Stepping Out,* the sequel to *Who Are the DeBolts?.* The filmmakers felt that besides doing a sequel on the DeBolts, they wanted to explore the phenomenon of families adopting handicapped children. They delivered a rough cut that was equally divided between the DeBolts and two other families. HBO, however, had expected a film which centered on the DeBolts. A compromise was worked out: the final cut included the DeBolts and one other family.

A producer will usually have the greatest control when working with public television. "We don't tell producers what tack to take," CPB's deputy director of programing Gene Katt claims. This does not mean, however, that the filmmaker should ignore public television's distribution arm, PBS. For instance, the CPB-funded series *Matters of Life and Death* was rejected by PBS; similarly, PBS refused to run Jeff Kreines and Joel DeMott's *Seventeen,* originally slated as part of the *Middletown* series. And Boston's public television station, WGBH, retains the right of final cut for all productions produced or commissioned by *Frontline.* Furthermore, individual public television stations can refuse to run a program offered by PBS.

The main thing to remember is that the entity that puts up the money usually calls the editorial shots, with the exception—*sometimes*—of public television. When a commercial or cable network funds the film, it will expect to be granted a strong role, if not absolute control. In addition, commercial and cable television are subject to the demands of the marketplace (as, increasingly, is public television, which has more and more corporate underwriting), which may affect a film's subject or, more likely, the treatment of that subject.

Despite the obstacles, Verite is determined to have her film shown on television and to get a contract which, if not perfect, is at least satisfactory. She can greatly enhance her chances if she clears all rights, researches her intended network and its audience, and puts together a strong, attractive package. Who knows, I might even switch from *Dallas* to watch *Was Shakespeare a Woman?.*

Paula R. Schaap is a writer and entertainment lawyer.

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From John Sanborn and Dean Winkler's "Big Electric Cat."

Lucinda Furlong

The fact is we are interested in television. Either in changing it, adapting it, getting rich off it, co-opting it, incorporating it, selling it, free-basing it or just plain getting our work on it; the name of the game is T-fucking-V....[1] —*John Sanborn*

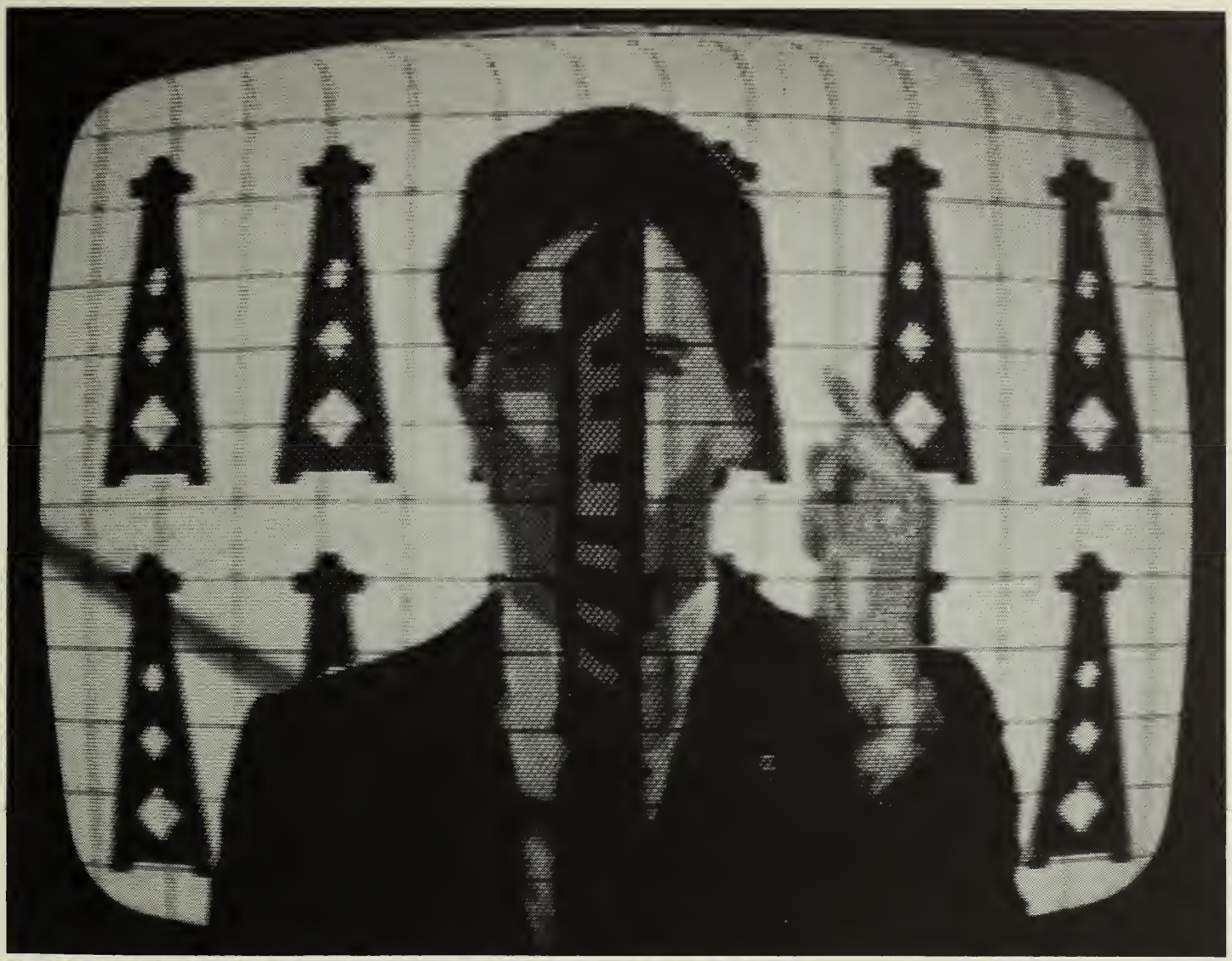
The conventional wisdom about video art these days is that artists—having once rejected broadcast television's forms, expensive production techniques, and means of distribution—now actively seek access to the means to produce "broadcast-quality" videotapes, many with the hope of having their work aired. Virtually every article read, every conference attended, or every tape watched reflects the new emphasis on high-technology production and high-visibility distribution.

Of course, not all artists are flocking to television, and those who are certainly aren't naive. There are still a few cracks in the broadcasting monolith, primarily in cable, and, while they can, a number of groups, such as the *Paper Tiger Television* collective, have managed to produce programs on public access channels. Many of these programs are notable, both for their distinctly low-tech look and, less often, their criticism of the television industry. Aside from these efforts, however, there is another phenomenon currently evident—the "new television." Many proponents believe they can buy into the industry's system of production and distribution without necessarily replicating the commercial product. The motives most often articulated are the desire for a bigger audience, the desire to change television, frustration over the art world's refusal to fully embrace video art, and, of course, money. But given video's supposed radical roots in the activist 1960s, it's disturbing—if not surprising—that so little attention has been paid to the implications of such a venture.

The shift in self-definition from video artist to television artist hasn't occurred overnight, nor is it simply a matter of terminology. A look at how this idea of television art is currently being discussed reveals some of the inconsistencies and contradictions in the enterprise.

> Video art is an elitist interpretation and fares better within those support structures oriented toward the elitist perspective.... The term best suited for the creative output of artists oriented toward the commercial industry is television art.[2]
>
> The testing of popular forms is at the forefront of a new generation of artists, hereafter referred to as populists, who, through the tools of the mass media, will carve out an expanded future for art expression....The success of their forms is not dependent on the mythology of the art market, but solely upon their ability to work within the construct of mass media.[3]

These statements by Carl Loeffler, one of several propagandists for the "new television," summarize the basic argument. Loeffler places video art and television art at opposite poles, representing elitism vs. populism. Video artists belong in the museum, while television artists "open their work to evaluation by commercial standards of



Max Almy's "Perfect Leader" is one of a new generation of computer-generated video art that is setting technical and aesthetic standards.

success: technical quality, audience share, and sponsorship."[4]

Loeffler isn't alone in his equation of television (by artists) with populism. "Art for the masses" has become the shibboleth of many video artists. According to John Sanborn, "Artists have gotten away from being precious about their work and are more interested in things like art for the masses."[5] And Dara Birnbaum echoes this sentiment, although she doesn't say that artists must meet commercial standards for success: "The immediate future lies in the hands of those makers who understand how and where high art can meet popular practices. As for video work, the form and materiality of this medium intrinsically binds it to 'mass media' and as such it must reach the masses."[6]

The idea of video art "reaching the masses" via television certainly isn't new. At the first American Film Institute National Video Festival in 1981, Jaime Davidovitch, founder of the Artists' Television Network, characterized video art of the last 10 years as "boring, self-indulgent, esoteric, and fiercely independent." He then suggested that the esoteric artists would find a good place in product research and development, while the new television artists would create new programs and develop new audiences.

While it's true that most art videotapes are inaccessible compared to standard TV fare, does it necessarily follow that the proposed alternative is populist? Such a position fails to acknowledge the clearly anti-populist nature of the commercial broadcasting industry. For, as soon as artists begin to buy into broadcast, they are at the mercy of an ever-changing "broadcast standard." I use this term not in reference to the NTSC signal standard, but to what has been dubbed the "eyeball factor"—that elusive state of the art that gives polish or gloss to a work. As John Godfrey, former supervising engineer at WNET's TV Lab, pointed out in a 1983 interview, "There never is perfect video": engineers won't "accept anything less or equal to the standard of a few years before."[7] If artists want to make television art, they must be able to use the latest—and costliest—technology. Does this sound populist?

There's nothing wrong with technical innovation in itself. The introduction of the time base corrector around 1974 meant that public broadcast stations, which were the only TV outlets for artists and independents, could no longer use technical inferiority as an excuse not to broadcast their work. However, it's clear that, for many, access to high-tech equipment has become a high priority and, for some, almost an obsession. For instance, three years ago, the New York Media Alliance was charged with the mandate to, in vice-chair Margot Lewitin's words, "explore the relationship between the commercial and non-profit sector," and, in so doing, "gain access to high-tech video tools."[8] Largely through the efforts of Robin White, Media Alliance director since 1983, the organization has succeeded in getting artists substantially reduced rates at two commercial production houses in New York City and one in Rochester. There are obvious benefits to artists based in those areas, particularly in light of the closings of both the TV Lab at WNET this year, and the Artists' TV Workshop at WXXI, in Rochester, in 1981.[9]



Avant-garde tapes like Robert Ashley's "Perfect Lives" bank on the language of television to speak to a mass audience.
Photo: Mary Lucier

But emphasis on high-tech production and commercial distribution—as evidenced, for example, by the weight given these topics in the Media Alliance's activities[10]—exerts enormous pressure on artists because technical innovation has become equated with being "avant garde." If you don't use a Quantel, ADO (Ampex Digital Optics), DVE (Digital Video Effects), or CMX for editing, then you're obviously not on the cutting edge, technically or aesthetically. Referring to the difficulty he'd encountered in the late 1970s getting his work shown, Shalom Gorewitz acknowledged at the Media Alliance's annual meeting that "as soon as I could use a 1″ studio to put that 'gloss' on my tape, my work was accepted."

The idea has taken hold that one can no longer make a "good tape" without using certain broadcast flourishes—computer editing, slow motion, digital effects, etc.—that have come to represent state-of-the-art video. Indeed, if one looks at works since 1979, one can find a virtual catalogue of computer editing techniques and effects in, for instance, Juan Downey's *Looking Glass,* Edin Velez's *Meta Mayan,* Dara Birnbaum's *Pop Pop Video* series, Kit Fitzgerald and John Sanborn's *Tribute to Nam June Paik* and other tapes, Bill Viola's *Hatsu Yume,* Dan Reeves's *Smothering Dreams,* Max Almy's *Leaving the Twentieth Century* and *Perfect Leader,* and Robert Ashley's *Perfect Lives.* These works are setting the technical and aesthetic standards against which other tapes will be judged.

One need only look back a little further into video's history for clues to what's looking more and more like an ever-spiraling consumerism. Not too long ago, plenty of people made interesting and challenging tapes using black and white equipment. (They weren't all "boring" and "esoteric.") After one-tube color cameras became the norm, suddenly three-tube color cameras loomed on the horizon. Fitzgerald and Sanborn were the first U.S. video artists to buy a three-tube camera, an investment Fitzgerald once compared to buying a house. Now many artists won't consider using anything but a three-tube. The cost differential between the two types of cameras is still high, despite the fact that prices have come down and technology improved. For instance, currently one-tube cameras range from roughly $800 to $3,000, while three-tubes are between $3,000 and $45,000. Most top-of-the-line portable broadcast cameras cost over $25,000.

A similar situation occurred with editing and "special effects." Initially, no one could edit, and real-time was touted as a challenge to the manipulative quality of TV's compressed time. Edit capabilities gradually improved throughout the 1970s, and then computer editing with its quick, precise cut became the hot technology. It was also very pricey. The only people who used specialized electronic devices in the early 1970s were those in the "image processing" camp, and they were interested in getting access to *low-cost* high tech. This often meant designing and building the equipment themselves; but it also meant full control over a means of production that remained outside the pressures of the broadcast sector.

The use of high-tech production equipment has several implications, the most obvious the question of who can afford to pay for access. Since virtually all video art is publicly-funded—through the National Endowment for the Arts and state arts councils—what kinds of funding patterns will emerge? Will larger grants for big-budget works mean that fewer grants will be awarded? Will this make it more difficult for younger video artists or those whose work isn't as slick?

Returning to the idea of populism—this time in reference to works specifically produced for television—the question remains whether artists can reconcile their intentions with the demands of television. Many people apparently think that by adopting the so-called "language" of television, they can produce works that are at once avant garde and accessible to a larger audience. But merely cloaking what is often called "dense" subject matter—Ashley's *Perfect Lives* comes to mind—with squeeze-zooms, split screens, and a host of other effects does not necessarily make the work any more accessible.

The next step is to produce tapes that are virtually indistinguishable from television. Sanborn and Dean Winkler's *Act III* and *Big Electric Cat* both adopt the conventions of music videos and advertising spots, not to subvert the industry, but to embrace it. In fact, according to Winkler, *Act III,* which was produced at Teletronics, the production house where he works, is now used as a sales demo tape. The 300 hours required for production were, as he put it, "sort of written off as R & D."[11] How can these tapes possibly *change* television, a goal most "television artists" ostensibly share?

One can't help but wonder whether their efforts shouldn't also be directed toward more political goals—e.g., lobbying local cable companies and government officials. These kinds of activities might begin to make a dent in what is a most undemocratic and unpopulist television industry. Finally, one must ask, "Who is really changing television, getting rich off it, incorporating it, selling it, free-basing it, or getting their work on it? And who is co-opting whom? What is the name of the game?"

NOTES

1. Quoted in Carl Loeffler, "Video as Popular Art in the Eighties," *The Second Link: Viewpoints on Video in the Eighties,* (Banff, Canada: Walter Phillips Gallery, 1983), p. 16.
2. Loeffler, "Toward a Criticism of Television Art," *Art Com,* Vol 6, No. 2, p. 43.
3. Loeffler, "Video as Popular Art in the Eighties," *op. cit.*
4. Greg McKenna, "Producing Post-Video Art Video," *Art Com,* No. 19, p. 25.
5. Quoted in Marita Sturken, "Video Art and the TV Revolution," *Boston Review,* Vol. 9, No. 3 (June 1984), p. 10.
6. Quoted in Loeffler, "Video as Popular Art in the Eighties," *op. cit.,* p. 14.
7. Quoted in Skip Blumberg, "Interview with John Godfrey," *The Independent,* Vol. 6, No. 5 (June 1983), p. 14.
8. Opening remarks at the Media Alliance annual conference, New York City, October 1984.
9. These closings resulted from the withdrawal of NYSCA funds, due to numerous problems, among them, retention of rights, difficulty getting tapes released to have dubs struck, and in WNET's case, the station's failure to match NYSCA grants.
10. The theme of the Media Alliance meeting last October was "The Alternative Media Community: Access to Audiences and Technology in the 1980s." Of the two panels, one focused on various distribution outlets, like HBO and home video stores. The other dealt with "technology" and aesthetics." This has been the organization's orientation for at least the last two years; see "New York Media Group Spins Its Reels in Rochester," by Martha Gever, *Afterimage,* Vol. 11, Nos. 1&2 (Summer 1983), p. 3.
11. Quoted in Diane Kolyer, "Video Art Goes State of the Art," *Videography,* Vol. 9, No. 10 (October, 1984), p. 39.

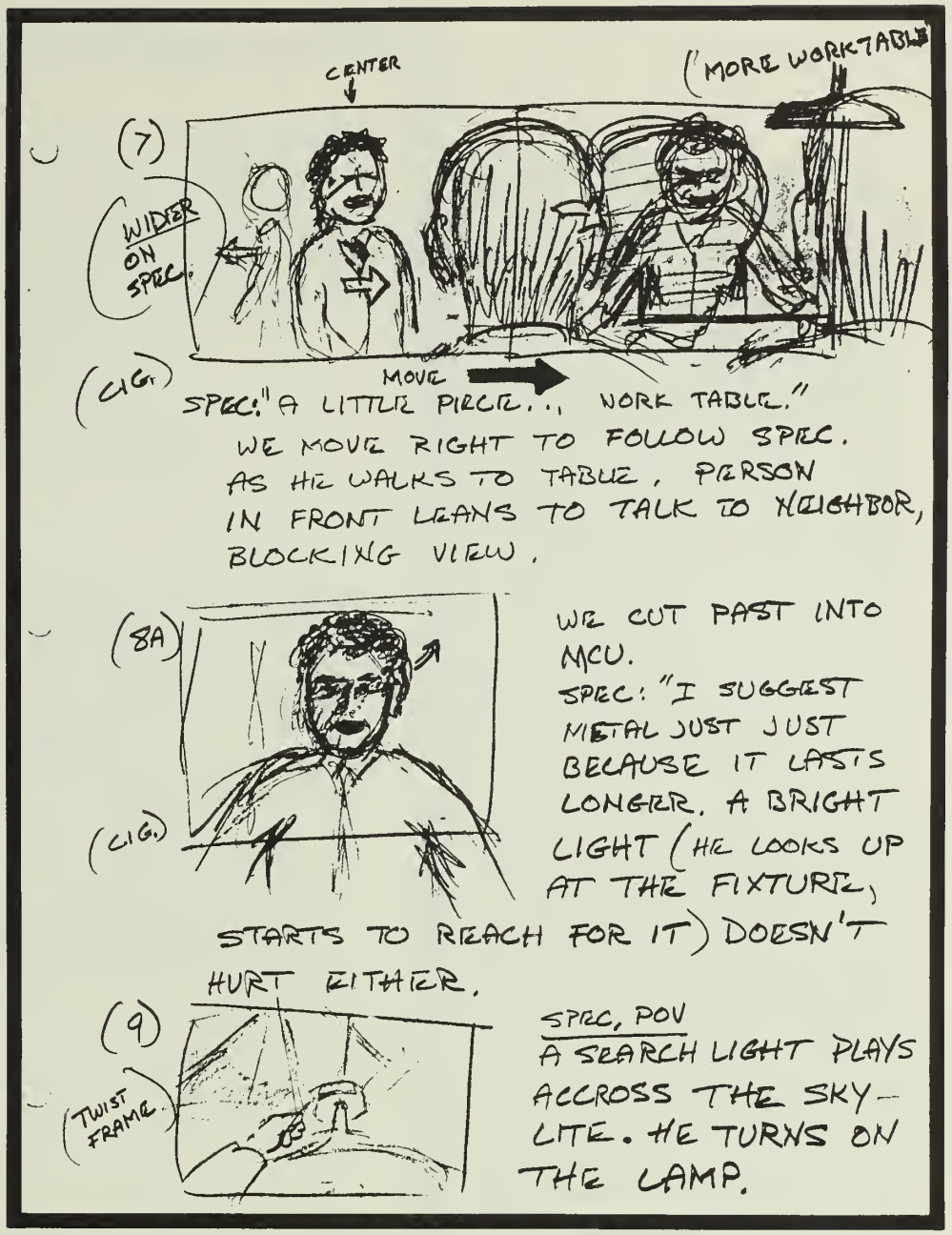
Lucinda Furlong is curatorial assistant in the Film and Video Department at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

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PICTURE THIS

Storyboards For Film and Video

Jay Padroff



Scott B, a proponent of storyboarding, used these illustrations to plan "The Specialist," a Super-8 film produced for a Nicaraguan benefit last winter.
Courtesy Artist

With the advent of music videos, visual elegance has rightly become an issue once again for selling a feature film. The recent re-release of Hitchcock's films from the 1950s (even in those muddy prints Universal has churned out) reminded American audiences of how beautiful and *visual* films used to be. The slapdash quality accepted in many features of the seventies seems to have run its course, and the care and precision of planning silent era films has returned as a model for many filmmakers today.

Accordingly, storyboarding is also an issue for directors and cinematographers. Yossi Segal, a professional East Coast storyboard artist, provides a handy definition of storyboarding: "It's thinking in advance of the composition of each shot and scene, and not yielding to the pressures of the set, where time is expensive and you tend to compromise because you can't think things over enough. Working in advance, you can contemplate and really design your picture."

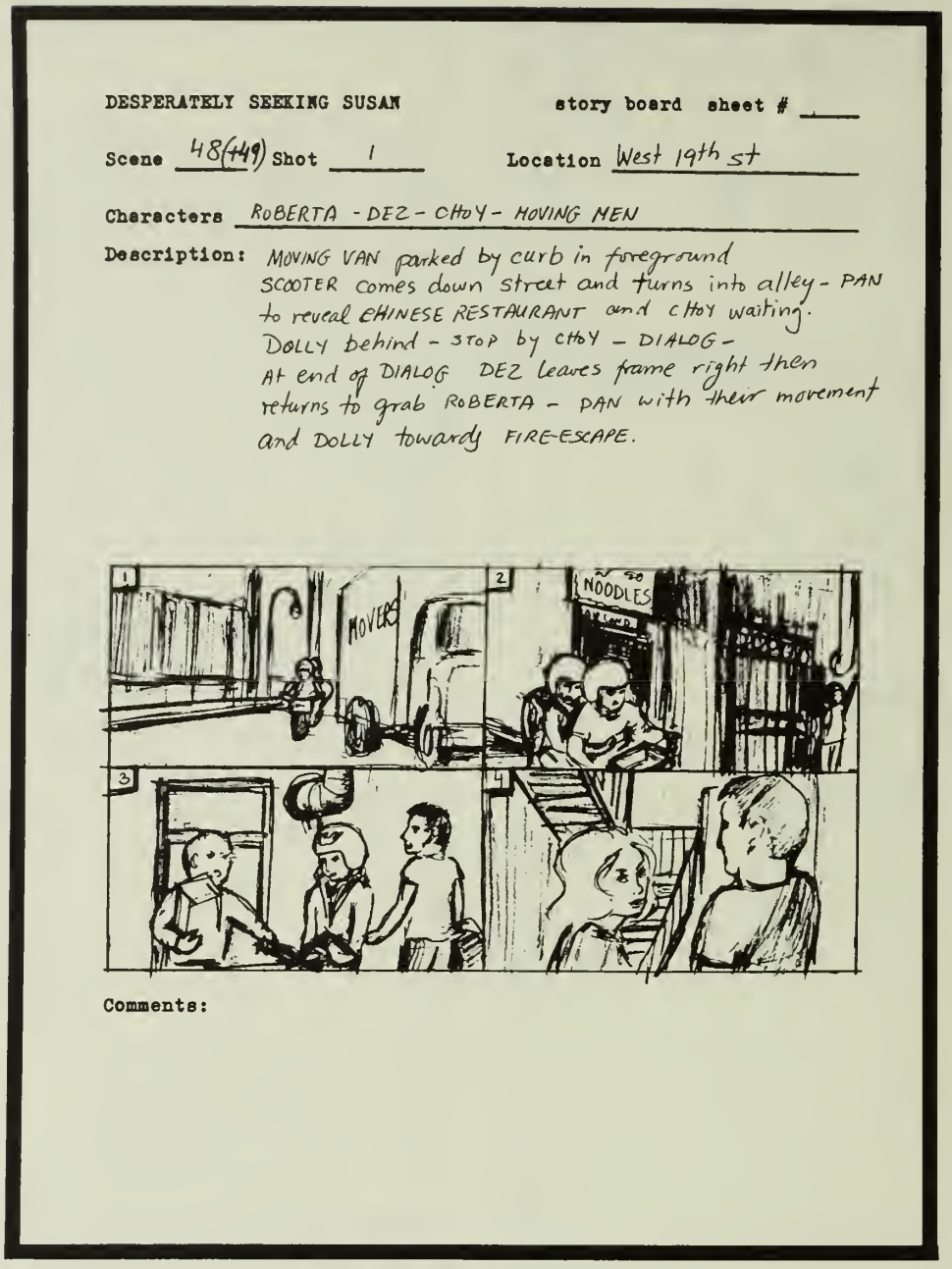
Storyboarding should imply a preconceived shot length and cutting rhythm, recognizing that scenes need to be paced. In *Vertigo,* Hitchcock had Kim Novak walk across the room to the beat of a metronome, and that's part of the idea—recognizing cinema's link to music as perhaps stronger than its bond to the graphic arts or the written word. Columbia University film professor Stefan Sharff's notations resemble musical notation. He has Ph.D. students experiment with deriving a new notation for the film director to use. Composition and framing, number of subjects in the shot, size of image, perceived camera distance from the subject, camera movement, lighting, and movement within the frame are all taken into account as well as rhythms (cutting and internal), pacing, and repetition of image.

Sharff, who in his younger days worked closely with Eisenstein, believes there is a correct syn-

tax or grammar which operates in the film medium. For example, in an interview with Salvador Rosillo in the early seventies, Sharff stated, "*Patton* was an interesting film [for] the use of separation, low angles, bigger-than-life pictures and the use of a fantastic theoretical device called familiar image.... It was a powerful film in that sense."

However, there is a wide range of opinion among directors regarding storyboarding; some see it as a necessary art or useful tool, while others view it as a stifler of the director's creativity, the cinematographer's freedom or the actors' emotions. Thus, Wim Wenders drew applause at his *Paris, Texas* press conference at the 1984 New York Film Festival for remarking, "I'm absolutely horrified by storyboards." Wenders seems proud that he has outgrown storyboards. "In the beginning, with my first [German] films, whenever I came to the set I had drawings," he said. He added, "*Hammett* was thoroughly storyboarded, [but] that was the last time. For *Paris, Texas* I tried not to have any notion whatsoever until we got on the set. We tried to first work on the scene with the actors, and then [director of cinematography] Robby [Muller] and I would decide on the shots."

At the other extreme, Joel Coen, whose horror flick *Blood Simple* was a surprise hit of the festival, said, "We storyboarded the entire movie because we had specific ideas to convey in each scene and were under a relatively tight, 40-day shooting schedule." His brother, producer and co-writer Ethan Coen added, "We're working on a comedy now, and that will be storyboarded too." From a more theoretical standpoint, director/cinematographer Michael Oblowitz (*King Blank,* Carly Simon music videos) says, "Eisenstein was an engineer, and I like the engineering side to making movies. I always do a drawing beforehand for whatever I'm going to shoot."



Susan Seidelman selectively storyboarded specific scenes for "Desperately Seeking Susan."
Courtesy Filmmaker

Sidney Lumet (*Prince of the City, Garbo Talks*), who is known as an "actor's director," says he never storyboards. "I've never done it in my life. I don't see what it's got to offer, except if you don't want to get out there and look through the camera." But independent director Victor Nunez disagrees: "The very opening scene of *A Flash of Green* was accomplished only because it was storyboarded. We had shot the entire day, and we were told there was an impending storm. We raced back to the location. We literally had 30 minutes to shoot, and it was only because I knew every shot that I was able to get those opening shots. And it's cut exactly as it was storyboarded." Nunez adds, "Sometimes [my storyboard] will be little more than a thumbnail sketch or outline. If a scene is evolving because of the actors' rehearsing, I would re-storyboard. I would not bind them to my perception if it was a very interactive scene. On the other hand, if it was a visual montage scene, I would tend to stick more closely with my original concept."

Director Susan Seidelman storyboards selectively. Her approach has been much the same in her $100,000 independent feature *Smithereens* as in her current $5-million studio picture, *Desperately Seeking Susan*. "We storyboarded *Smithereens* a bit, but I tend not to stick to those things. It's best for me just as a guide. Often I'll plan 10 shots, and [then] on the set realize I only need five of them. We're storyboarding parts of *Desperately Seeking Susan*—like the chase sequence through the back halls of a nightclub."

Some filmmakers have found storyboarding useful when making the transition from one format to another. Frank and Caroline Mouris, whose animated short *Frank Film* won an Oscar, moved to live-action drama with their American Film Institute short *And Then* (1978) and their recent, first feature, *Hot Talk*. "We had to storyboard at least 75 percent of *Hot Talk*. We were storyboarding all the time we were raising money and doing preproduction, and it certainly saved us a lot of money, although we still threw away a good five scenes. People tell us *Hot Talk* looks a lot more expensive than the $285,000 it cost. Storyboarding also helped us criticize scenes that were just 'talking heads,' so we made those changes before shooting."

Similarly, Scott and Beth B began their feature filmmaking in Super-8, where, as Scott B says,

DESPERATELY SEEKING SUSAN story board sheet # ____

Scene 50 Shot 1 Location WEST 19th street Alley

Characters ROBERTA - DEZ - MOVING MAN A

Description: Pick up ROBERTA +DEZ coming up from lower left of frame, MOVING MAN A comes downstairs slight PAN as they go up and out of frame

Could also start frame with MOVING MAN A going down as R+D come up and squeeze in MOVING MAN B in same frame



Comments: Could the camera be possibly placed outside fire escape so as to allow a more comfortable maneuverring in the frame?!

"Editing was more in the blocking, and cuts weren't so important." Working separately now, sometimes in 35mm, Scott B has become a firm believer in storyboards. "It helps me compress time and story elements, to know where to place things in the frame for a smooth or a jarring cut, and to make statements about the material and a character's state of mind in advance. Before, my focus had been primarily on the situation. After *Vortex,* I was feeling dissatisfied. I wanted to use film grammar in a more explicit way. I storyboarded *The Specialist,* a Super-8 film for a Nicaraguan benefit last winter. Since then, I've completely storyboarded one feature, *Playland,* and I'm going to storyboard my next feature, *Double Date,* which I'll be shooting in the spring. I'm currently storyboarding a short drama about a Lower East Side tenement landlord."

Beth B, meanwhile, has moved into the music video arena. Working for producer Philip Meese, she directed Dominatrix's *The Dominatrix Sleeps Tonight* and then Joan Jett's *I Need Someone.* Meese says, "For *The Dominatrix* there was no storyboard, but I wanted the next one storyboarded because the Joan Jett management kept making changes, and our script wasn't formulated. So illustrator Alan Zdinack took photographs of the actual location, the old Seaview Hospital on Staten Island, and drew the storyboard based on that."

Meese also produced The Restless's *I Want To Know,* which Susan Seidelman directed. "Susan had scripted it very carefully. She worked out the details of the cutting ahead of time, and it never occurred to me that we needed a storyboard." Of Southside Johnny's *New Romeo,* directed by Adam Freedman, Meese says, "Alan Zdinack's storyboard was an incredible aid. We were able to shoot it in 15 hours at the Hard Rock Cafe."

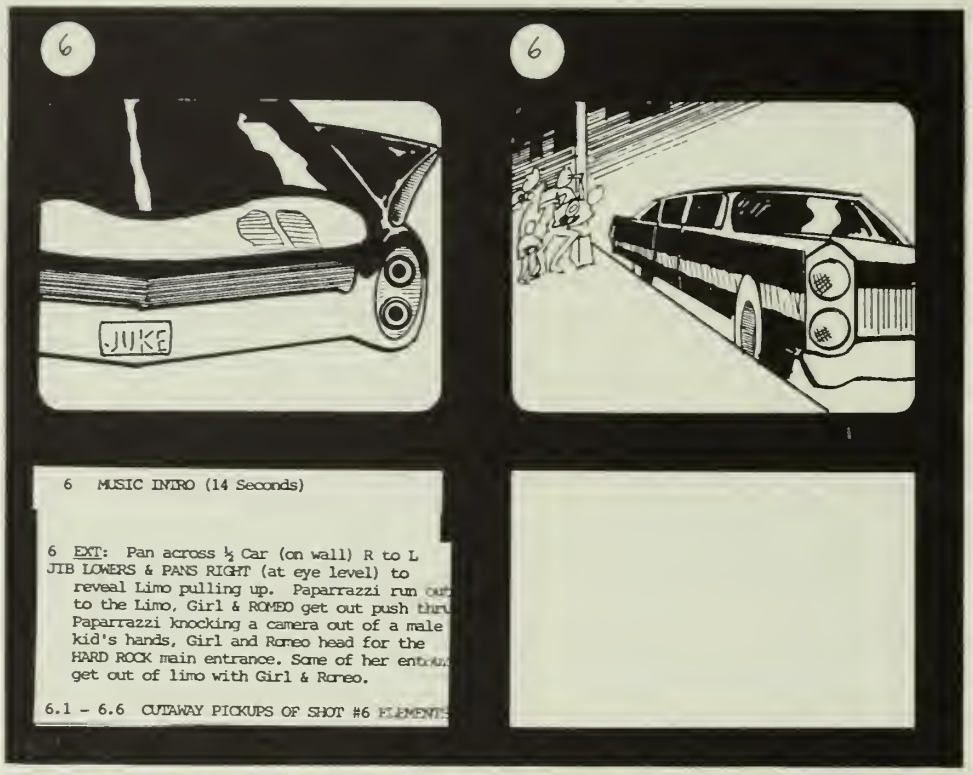
Zdinack is a second generation illustrator. "My father has done storyboards and animatics for Madison Avenue for 30 years." He enjoys illustrating music videos. "It's a burst of energy. I'll sit down with the director and script supervisor for a day and organize the shots, then go home and draw the boards. That's my input—refining framing, and keeping a continuity and flow from frame to frame. I try to keep the artwork simple and show a sense of depth. I see my style as being as simple as possible."

Rock video producer Ken Walz (*Girls Just Wanna Have Fun*) pointedly avoids storyboards whenever possible. "I was in advertising, and the way they're used in the industry tends to really lock you in. They're valuable as guides, but represent to me a very buttoned-up world with no room to experiment or go with what's happening at the moment. One of the benefits of doing music videos is having flexibility."

Nevertheless, when working with director Michael Oblowitz on Janey Street's *Under the Clock,* Walz acceded to Oblowitz's working methods—taking Polaroids of the location and drawing his own storyboards down to the last detail. "I don't want to spend a half-hour on my set working out where my lights are supposed to be," says Oblowitz. "Time is money. I can draw in the light on my storyboards. Then I sit down with my gaffer, and we work out all our positions. On the set, we do it exactly like that piece of paper."

Independent filmmakers Paul Wolansky and Michael Shmulevich agree. They even had storyboards for their recent feature *Just Married* drawn in color by their art director, Michael Fishgoyt. "Color is very important," says Shmulevich, "because it creates the mood of the scene." Wolansky adds, "[Director of cinematography] Gregory [Sigalov] was involved when storyboarding was done, so pre-lighting was taken into account. Copies [of the storyboards] were distributed to the script supervisor, the art department, props, wardrobe, and camera department. The only people we didn't want to see them were the actors."

Kenneth Anger, whose 1963 avant-garde short *Scorpio Rising* which, with its sharp cuts, TV footage and use of pop songs portended the music video craze, has always prepared his films by doing "little thumbnail sketches. They're all in the collection of the Cinematheque Francaise." In the late 1940s, Anger tried to raise money for



Alan Zdinack, the son of a storyboard illustrator, drew the storyboards for Philip Meese's music video "New Romeo."

Courtesy Filmmaker

an intended feature called *Puce Women* with a very lavish storyboard. "I had Paul Mathison—a children's fairy tale illustrator—create a professionally-drawn, vertical accordion-fold presentation book from my sketches to get Hollywood art collector millionaires like Arthur Freed and Albert Lewin to invest in it, which they didn't. I've never forgiven Hollywood for that, and I wound up moving to Paris." That's where Anger eventually published *Hollywood Babylon,* a different kind of picture book, and so managed to accrue an indirect triumph for the ever-struggling American independent film movement.

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There are several useful books on storyboards, structure, and cinematic syntax. In *The Elements of Cinema* (Columbia University Press, 1982), Stefan Sharff uses the shot-by-shot analysis method to isolate basic models of structure, which include separation ("fragmentation of a scene into single images in alternation. . . A conversation may be filmed with one person looking right in *medium shot* and the other looking left in *close-up* [to] bring people in closer relation than if they were in the same shot"), parallel action ("two or more narrative lines running simultaneously and presented by alternation between scenes. . . Using parallel action, a filmmaker can extend or condense *real time* and create a *screen time* with a logic of its own"), familiar image ("a graphically strong shot that repeats itself with little change during a film. The repetition has a subliminal effect, creating. . . a stabilizing bridge to the action and accrues meaning as the film progresses"), and slow disclosure ("the gradual introduction of pictorial information within a single shot"). It's a thought-provoking text on an area which has been largely unexplored, but it remains no substitute for Sharff's course itself which, as far as I know, has no equivalent at any other American film school.

Slow disclosure adds immeasurably to cinema's capacity for suspense, wit, and elegance. The so-called "Lubitsch touch" was in part derived from this technique—used narratively as well as visually—and along these lines I recommend *Three Screen Comedies* by Samson Raphaelson (University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), which contains production scripts for the Lubitsch-Raphaelson collaborations *Trouble in Paradise, The Shop Around the Corner,* and *Heaven Can Wait.* Although there isn't a frame blow-up or a thumbnail sketch in the entire volume, the book and the films themselves articulate a lot about what, besides Eisenstein and Hitchcock, Sharff admires in cinema.

Then there's Herbert Zettl's superb study of applied media aesthetics, *Sight Sound Motion* (Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1973). This work expounds on balance and imbalance, framing, color depth, and volume—all in terms of human psychology. Zettl's ample discussions of vectors and the z-axis (which structure three-dimensionality) are particularly useful.

The Cinema as a Graphic Art (Hill and Wang) by Vladimir Nilsen, one of Eisenstein's last cinematographers, is probably the best text on structuring short compositions. Cinematographer Edward Lachman (*Desperately Seeking Susan*) agrees, finding it "deplorable" that the book has gone out of print. "I called the publisher to get it reprinted," he says, but for the time being this treasure trove is extremely hard to find.

Lachman's own camerawork is on display in two important volumes of interest to every potential film grammarian. In Chris Marker's classic short *La Jetee,* filmed black-and-white still photographs are accompanied by a conventional motion picture soundtrack to tell a story; with *Chausse-Trappe* (Editions de Minuit, 1981), Lachman consciously goes one step further—he never shot the motion picture. Adapted from an original, *film noir* feature screenplay by Elieba Levine, *Chausse-Trappe* ("entrapped") is like a huge storyboard or a French roman-photo comprised of black-and-white still photographs Lachman took of his actors on location. It's a motion picture shot with a still camera accompanied by dialogue in hand-drawn characters. Utilizing sequential images, it serves to clearly demonstrate visual grammar.

So does *Nick's Film/Lightning Over Water* (Zweitausendeins, 1981) by Wim Wenders and Charles Sievernich, comprised of shot-by-shot color reprints from Nicholas Ray and Wim Wenders's experimental docudrama, *Lightning Over Water.* The cinematographer is again Lachman, and this book is easily available through Blue Angel, Inc., in Charlottesville, Virginia. There are, of course, many other books which attempt shot-by-shot reproductions (with varying success) of certain classic films, ranging from *Potemkin* to *Psycho* to *A Hard Day's Night.*

Finally, I strongly endorse two books pertaining to Eisenstein: Vladimir Nizhny's *Lessons with Eisenstein* (Da Capo Press, 1979) and *Eisenstein at Work* by Jay Leyda and Zina Voynow (Pantheon Books/The Museum of Modern Art, 1982).

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SOLIDARITY FOR A WHILE

Cinema Strikes Back: Radical Filmmaking in the United States, 1930–1942
by Russell Campbell
Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982, 387 pp.

A little over a decade ago, the radical film movement of the thirties was rescued from the archives and rediscovered by a new generation committed to the possibility of a political cinema. Thanks to film studies, that academic growth industry of the seventies, the story of the radical film movement's main architects and organizations—the (Workers') Film and Photo League, Nykino, and Frontier Films—has now been told in journal articles, published interviews, and book-length studies.

Unfortunately, one of the more recent contributions to this literature, Russell Campbell's *Cinema Strikes Back,* has aroused little critical attention, perhaps because it appeared so quickly on the heels of another book that covers much of the same turf, William Alexander's *Film on the Left* (Princeton University Press, 1981). Despite the similarity in subject matter, however, Campbell has a very different story to tell. While Alexander confesses that his research was inpired by a personal quest for political role models, and consequently writes a group portrait which reduces conflicting politics to conflicting personalities, Campbell's history places the filmmakers on the broader stage of political history and attempts a comprehensive account of their institutional alliances, cultural influences, and evolving aesthetic.

The radical film movement's origins trace back to the 1930 formation of the Workers' Film and Photo League ("Workers'" was dropped from the name in 1933) under the auspices of the United States arm of the World International Relief (WIR), sponsored by the Communist International. Headquartered in Germany, the WIR developed during the twenties beyond its famine relief work in the Soviet Union to become a catalyst of cultural activity ranging from the publication of workers' dailies to the distribution of Soviet films. Following this lead, the U.S. WIR provided institutional support for theater, dance, singing groups, and, ultimately, the Film and Photo League (FPL) production collective. The WIR-supplied loft where the group gathered attracted a motley collection of jobless college graduates, curious photographers, left-leaning intellectuals, and working class radicals enthusiastic about the possibilities of leftist film and photography. They were motivated both by the negative image (or the total absence) of the working class movement in conventional newsreels, and the positive example of Soviet documentaries, the anti-cinema of Hollywood.

The group's initial ambitions to create an American documentary movement on the level achieved by the Soviets were not only thwarted by limited resources and inexperience, but overruled by the sense of urgency palpable in everyday events. "Very often," remembered Leo Seltzer, who was responsible for a large portion of the FPL's footage, "there'd be a group of four or five guys sitting there, the theoreticians, sitting talking, philosophizing. . . . And then someone would say, 'Hey, something's happening! Call Seltzer!' And I'd take the Eyemo under my arm and go out and shoot."

As the man with the movie camera, Seltzer embodied the ethos of the FPL in this early period. The League's filmmakers could be found on picket lines and in the midst of demonstrations, where the documentors risked confrontations with sheriffs' rifles and round-ups in paddy wagons. The resulting films—such as *Bonus March, Hunger 1932,* and *America Today*—were quickly released to audiences in union halls, workers' clubs, and, in one case that Seltzer recalled, at the scene of a strike itself, where blacklisted miners were cheered by the cinematic witness to their struggle flickering on a white sheet stretched between two trees.

The contemporary leftist press, which chronicled the work of the FPL, vacillated between promotion and encouragement of the League's work and chiding acknowledgement that its haphazardly produced newsreels only scratched the surface of cinema's revolutionary possibilities, which stretched beyond documentary to include satire, comedy, and drama. Within the League, several of the "theorists"—Ralph Steiner, Irving Lerner, Leo Hurwitz—were also feeling increasingly constricted by the FPL's exclusive focus on cinematic journalism, derided by Hurwitz as an endless "parade of marching, marching, marching." The three hoped to involve the FPL in more ambitious films that, Hurwitz argued, would not "*assume* the revolutionary approach," but rather "*convince* the spectator of its correctness." Such films required full-time professionals free to explore cinematic art, organized into a "shock troupe" dedicated to collective filmmaking. When, in 1934, the New York FPL executive committee rejected the plan as "elitist," Hurwitz, Steiner, and Lerner broke with the League to form their own group, Nykino.

According to Campbell, the executive committee's label of the threesome as elitist was essentially on target. But it was through Nykino, not the FPL, that the leftist documentary movement survived. The defection of the "Hurwitz faction" robbed the League of both experience and direction, and the ranks were further deplet-



The Depression-era Workers Newsreels, produced by the Film and Photo League, are part of a long tradition of radical filmmaking in America. Photo: Leo Seltzer

ed by the departure of Tom Brandon, the mastermind of the FPL's distribution. At the same time, the groups to which the FPL distributed its films began to disappear. Tied financially and administratively to the international network of the Communist Party, few of the workers' organizations survived the defeat of the German Communist Party and Moscow's adoption of the Popular Front strategy in 1933-34. Eventually the marching died away as the New Deal sapped radicals' emotional momentum and absorbed some of its talent (Seltzer, for instance, went to work for the Work Projects Administration). By the end of 1935, the FPL was dead in all but name. As Hurwitz, Lerner, and Steiner moved forward, propelled by artistic ambition, the workers' culture movement from which they emerged collapsed behind them.

The FPL had traditionally been involved in a broad spectrum of cultural activism. In addition to making films, it organized protests (ranging from demonstrations to stink bomb attacks) against screenings of fascist films, exhibited and distributed Soviet movies, and ran a filmmaking school. In contrast, the Nykino group saw themselves exclusively as filmmakers; they made their alliances, consequently, not with other workers' organizations, but with fellow culture makers on the left. Photographers Paul Strand, Willard Van Dyke, and, for a time, Henri Cartier-Bresson were among those who joined the FPL defectors in their new venture. Close ties with the Workers' Laboratory Theatre (another WIR-linked organization that provided the institutional model for the Nykino "shock troupe") and the Group Theater offered inspiration for the group's evolving ideas on "enacted documentary."

The financial means available to Nykino, however, were insufficient to allow its members to do full-time film work. Their full professionalization became possible only when Nykino, in a burst of publicity, reorganized as the non-profit Frontier Films, Inc. in March 1937. By this time, the milieu in which the Nykino members lived and worked had broken through to creative and social legitimacy. The new cachet of the cultural left rubbed off on the newly-formed group, attracting to its doorstep *New York Times* reporters and an advisory board of left-wing celebrities such as Clifford Odets, Malcolm Cowley, Aaron Copland, Lillian Hellman, and Archibald MacLeish. Well-to-do sympathizers and a few foundations contributed grants and guaranteed loans, which provided only the bare means of support yet made it possible for the Frontier filmmakers to accomplish what the more loosely organized—and more radically conceived—Nykino could not: the production of a sizable body of completed films of high technical quality, which reached an audience of thousands. Yet, Campbell argues, the freedom to make art which the Frontier organization provided at the same time dulled its members' political instincts.

During the FPL period, the filmmakers, their subjects, and their audiences all belonged to the same, seamless radical network. It was precisely these links that were broken when Hurwitz and company left the League. By professionalizing, the Frontier group were inevitably removed from their subjects, a condition symbolized by the fate of their first planned project, a film on child labor: the script called for children working in a laundry, but the filmmakers couldn't find any.

On the other hand, by choosing to make political films designed to "convince" viewers rather than in solidarity with them, the producers became equally removed from their audience, whose sympathetic attention they now sought from a distance. Thus, in Frontier's three documentaries on contemporary anti-fascist and anti-imperialist battles abroad—*Heart of Spain, Return to Life,* and *China Strikes Back*—no one is identified as a Communist, including, Campbell wryly notes, Mao Tse-Tung. Instead, the struggles were cast as good guys-bad guys confrontations, which would hopefully be palatable to a wide audience. Similarly, Frontier's docudrama *Native Land* so thoroughly saturated its labor spy theme with the visual symbolism of mainstream America as to be rendered politically innocuous. In aesthetic terms, the drive to create audience "appeal" led to a greater reliance on invented narratives, sympathetically drawn characters with whom viewers could identify, the use of professional actors, and sonorous, rhetorical voiceovers—all the documentary conventions that, 25 years later, the advocates of cinema verite would seek to overthrow.

Campbell's final judgment on the radical film movement, however, is less concerned with aesthetics than politics. Frontier's drift into accommodation with the New Deal was by no means unique. Other cultural organizations with radical roots, such as the John Reed Clubs and the Workers' Laboratory Theatre, also moved from proletarian militance to middle-class respectability. In softening the social analysis of their later documentaries, Frontier was only echoing the larger, Party-dictated stategy of the Popular Front, which rejected militancy in favor of seeking alliances with other "progressive" forces in society against the common enemy of fascism. This approach made possible greater visibility for Frontier's films, but it's precisely these moves into the mainstream that Campbell ultimately indicts. Like so many of the left's histories of itself, *Cinema Strikes Back* is a history of "mistakes," a familiar tale of co-optation in which the ghost of the Revolution That Might Have Been mocks the wrong turns of a movement that failed.

Yet precisely because co-optation is a familiar tale, one wishes for a less familiar, less orthodox alternative than the one Campbell provides: more militancy, more class analysis, more explicit articulation of revolutionary goals. In his own way, Campbell believes in heroes—individuals who stand fast, unmoved by the cultural tide—as much as Alexander does. Campbell writes:

> The greatest danger [to radical initiatives] lies at the point at which government and business begin to make concessions: here there is the temptation for militants, in their anxiety to foster the move and protect the gains which have been made, to cease their articulation of revolutionary goals—particularly when they themselves, former outsiders, enjoy a taste of power.

But culture is not made by heroic individuals; it is the result of a collaboration between subjects and their historical conditions. Campbell asserts that in the last analysis, the technically crude newsreels of the Film and Photo League were more successfully subversive than Frontier's more polished productions. But to what can we credit that subversive edge? To the filmmakers' consciousness, to the activities they chronicled, or to the political uses to which the films were put? The answer would seem to be all three. Could filmmakers maintain that radical bite by steadfastness of will alone, in the absence of the other two conditions? Apparently not: the FPL and the proletarian cultural groups that supported it were through by the middle of the 1930s.

Because Campbell relies on the methodology of "mistakes" and its analytical cousin, the search for the "correct line," his conclusion misses one of the most interesting issue his book raises: ambition. The admixture of personal, political, and artistic ambitions which drove the Frontier group may well be a political problem, but it could hardly be termed a mistake. Ambition is rather a condition of cultural production: nobody wants to make films that no one will see. The respectability the Frontier filmmakers cultivated and the liberal rhetoric they adopted were bargains they struck with their times in their attempt to make leftist films a visible force in their culture.

Would the Nykino-Frontier filmmakers have been more "correct" to abandon their publicist role and, instead, concentrate on sharpening their radical critique before the increasingly shrinking audience which shared their assumptions? Did the material means exist to accomplish that? Is that strategy merely a formula for a different brand of elitism, on one hand, and for marginality on the other? Answers are speculative, but Campbell's narrative makes clear that these were questions this group of filmmakers never asked. They were oblivious to the paradox that all cultural producers—particularly politically inspired ones—struggle for visibility, and, in achieving this, transform the conditions under which their work is received and understood. That paradox undercut the artistic and political sincerity of such earnest projects as *Native Land.*

The equally sincere, hard-line corrective which Campbell prescribes openly ignores this paradox, but cannot overcome it. Until radical artists come to terms with the contradiction inherent in all cultural products, all histories of radical art, like that of the thirties film movement, will be a history of mistakes.

—Debra Goldman

THE 30-SECOND CAMPAIGN

The Spot: The Rise of Political Advertising on Television
by Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates
Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984, 416 pp., $17.50

In an effort to deflect the critical barbs which continuously rain down on political television commercials, media consultant John Deardourff wrote an ad script demonstrating how much information can in fact be communicated in a 30-second script:

> I believe that the question of abortion is one that ought to be reserved exclusively to a woman and her doctor. I favor giving women the unfettered right to abortion. I also favor the federal funding of abortion through Medicaid for poor women as an extension of the right to an abortion, and I oppose any statutory or constitutional limitations on that right.

Deardourff's point in this exercise runs against the grain of conventional wisdom, and gets its due notice in *The Spot: The Rise of Political Advertising on Television,* by Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates. In this useful and lucid book, the brevity argument against political advertising—i.e. that the short political commerical is to blame for issueless campaigns—is one of the many suppositions that Diamond and Bates examine and find wanting.

Diamond has a history of pricking inflated claims regarding the relation of television and politics made by cheerleaders and doomsayers alike. As head of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's News Study Group in the Department of Political Science, which since 1972 has conducted research on politics and press processes, Diamond has challenged nebulous assumptions about media politics with solidly grounded data and, time and again, demonstrated how the record deflates the myth. Together with Bates, media researcher at Harvard's Institute of Politics, Diamond continues his mythbusting in *The Spot.*

Those familiar with Diamond's earlier books —*The Tin Kazoo, Good News, Bad News,* and *Sign Off*—will recognize his highly readable style, laced with relevant anecdotes and good humor, and will also find certain themes and conclusions he had previously discussed in abbreviated form now fully developed. Here, the authors begin with the idea that the political spot advertisement, or "polispot" as it is called, has come to dominate U.S. political campaigns. But they view controlled television as neither a Pandora's box nor a genie's bottle. Rather, its powers are held in check by print and electronic news reports and analyses, live debates and other components constituting and surrounding the campaign, not to mention the increasing sophistication and skepticism of the average television viewer regarding advertising claims, political or otherwise. Furthermore, the dominance in the voting booth of real world events over controlled images is a theme which underlies every page. As a professed believer in "old politics," Diamond would subscribe to the view that money, organization, party support, and political records are far more consequential in the electoral struggle than ads, polls, media consultants, and even network campaign coverage. Despite their often hyperbolic, self-endorsing claims, many media consultants finally do admit that their power is closely circumscribed by factors beyond their control. Gerald Rafshoon, for example, said of Jimmy Carter's 1980 bid for reelection, "It we had it to do all over again, we would take the $30 million we spent in the [media] campaign and get three more helicopters for the Iran rescue mission."

Once this general caveat is given, the polispot can rightly be singled out as the centerpiece of all major political campaigns—always financially, and often strategically. *The Spot* includes a case study of John Glenn's 1984 campaign, outlined at some length to show the manner in which political ads fit into a general campaign strategy; a historical survey of the rise of political advertising from 1952 to 1980; an analysis of the rhetorical styles and four-phase strategy which routinely characterize ad campaigns; and a discussion of the effects of paid political advertising on the voters directly, on press coverage, and on the overall electorical process.

Diamond and Bates viewed 650 political ads in the course of their research. They single out both the famous and the obscure, the originals and the rip-offs. They dust off forgotten classics, like Ike and Mamie singing "God Bless America" at the end of a campaign film. They also shed new light on some warhorses of political advertising, such as Tony Schwartz's infamous anti-Goldwater"Daisy Girl" commercial.

As Diamond and Bates move through the many election campaigns, certain evolutionary trends emerge: the rise of the spot as the principal advertising format, the replacement of ad agencies by media consultants, and the shift from hard- to soft-sell techniques. At the same time, certain unchanging rules are revealed —e.g., no candidate can survive too great a discrepancy between his or her screen image and actual conduct as perceived by the press and public. Polispots are shown to be extremely effective at certain things, such as increasing name identification and reinforcing the support of the already committed. But the authors conclude that no one can honestly say how well polispots can lure the undecided or convert the uncommitted, given all the variables that enter into an individual's voting choice. Among media consultants, the rule of thumb is that a certain small percentage of their spots work; they just never know which ones make up that percentage.

The Spot focuses less on what political ads result in, and more on what they are the result of. This emphasis on the who, what, when and why of past campaigns provides a much-needed chronicle. This is particularly true for the early history, prior to Joe McGinnis's *The Selling of the President* and Watergate's making the campaign process itself the longest running election story. The book's final section, however, is its most valuable; it is here that many of the issues which surfaced in the preceding chapters and circulated at large during this last campaign are gathered together and analyzed.

Diamond and Bates discuss the death of the party system, the rise of the outside candidate, the problems of financing media campaigns, and the telegenic president, among other hot topics. In their conclusions, Diamond and Bates are not hesitant to ride against the prevailing winds. For instance, on the subject of media consultants and their increasing importance in determining a campaign's foremost issues, the authors are not thrown off balance by the consultants' vertiginous ascent to power. From the days of Rosser Reeves, who winnowed Eisenhower's 32 campaign issues down to three, to today's comprehensive media managers, it is still the boss who calls the final shots. "Candidates," the authors observe with characteristic levelheadedness, "need not bend themselves and their candidacies to suit a particular consultant. They can always get a new helper."

Despite its ample illustrations, scripts, bibliography and 400-page length, *The Spot* still seems a fairly cursory treatment of a complicated history. Much ground is covered, but it is covered lightly. The resulting simplifications in campaign histories occasionally skew the record. For instance, the Lewis Lehrman–Mario Cuomo gubernatorial race in New York is mentioned as an example of the polispots' effectiveness in creating name recognition for wealthy businessman Lehrman. The only specific reason given for Lehrman's loss is "the time buyer's alleged failure to buy enough airtime upstate." Intended or not, the implication is that more airtime might have made the difference, but this overlooks the fact that Lehrman was already breaking records in his campaign expenditures and Cuomo won *despite*

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this financial imbalance. It also neglects the existence of sharp ideological differences between the candidates, and the grounding of that race on those differences. The problem here, as elsewhere in the book, is one of brevity and omission, rather than mistaken analysis.

The authors choose John Glenn as representative of the "new politics campaigner" in the 1984 Democratic race; first, because Glenn does aptly illustrate the fate of a candidate with too great a gap between his crafted media image and his public performance, and second, because Diamond is a self-described "Glenn-watcher since the Mercury astronaut days." But if one has to chose the quintessential new politics politician, Gary Hart would be a more suitable choice. His candidacy epitomized both the power and limitations of a media campaign and the continued importance of old politics, and would have provided a more accurate reflection of the salient aspects of the 1984 Democratic primary with respect to the television candidacy.

These are minor quibbles which represent not so much an argument with what *The Spot* has to say as a desire for the authors to go into greater depth and detail. In addition, a chapter on television and the electoral process in the other major democracies would have provided an illuminating foil, particularly as the United States is alone in allowing the unlimited sale of television time to its candidates during the official campaign year. Even so, *The Spot* provides an informed and judicious assessment of the history, methods and effectiveness of political advertising on television. It should help clear the air of the cacophonous claims and laments surrounding the powers of the polispot, and make way for a more reasonable discourse on the subject in campaign years ahead.

—Patricia Thomson

Patricia Thomson is a film and video critic living in New York.

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MEMBER DISCOUNTS

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SINKING CREEK: LAID BACK IN NASHVILLE

The Sinking Creek Film Celebration, held in Nashville, Tennessee every June, doesn't judge its film entries along genre lines, but rather in categories of young, student, and independent films. The result is an unusual diversity of theme, genre, and running length—a celebration of American independent filmmaking rather than just a showplace.

All films selected for screening are given cash awards from a total of $6,000 at the judges' disposal, and all awarded prints are rented at one dollar per minute. The Tennessee Arts Commission buys two films to add to its collection; last year, they were *Godzilla Meets Mona Lisa,* a documentary by Ralph Arlyck, and *Yours for the Taking,* an animated film by Karen Aqua and Jeannee Redmond. Sinking Creek also presents two special awards for exceptional works in animation and documentation dealing with social and political issues (the John and Faith Hubley Award for Animation, and the Anthony Hodgkinson Award for Documentary). On average, 55 films are shown each year.

In 1984, I went to Nashville after my student narrative, *Filial Dreams,* was selected for the celebration, and spent five full days taking in nearly every screening, seminar, and workshop. The concentration was on animation, documentary and experimental works; though the festival did clearly welcome narrative works, my impression was that a good portion of American independent narrative filmmakers are missing the boat at Sinking Creek.

Mary Jane Coleman, founder and director of Sinking Creek, welcomes attending filmmakers with open arms. Coleman seems dedicated to spreading the word about independent cinema. She recognizes video as a sister art form to film, and has talked of incorporating it into the competition—perhaps next year.

The projection of films at Sinking Creek is professional, and the festival sends your prints back to you promptly and in good condition. The celebration distributes and publicizes the schedule of screenings and seminars—and holds to it.

The Sinking Creek Film Celebration is not a buyer's market. The audience is composed primarily of film enthusiasts and Nashville residents. It's an educational, inspirational, and exhausting experience. Last year's guest artists and lecturers included Jane Aaron, Skip Blumberg, Pearl Bowser, John Canemaker, and the Filippino filmmaker Kidlat Tahimik. Films shown included *Color the Apple Blue,* by V.R. Jiminez; *Eat the Beat,* by David McCutchen; *Follies: An Introduction to Don Quixote,* by Michael Long; *Machine Story,* by Doug Miller; *The Scarf,* by Laura Morgan; and *(The) Stars and Their Courses,* by William Rose. —*Susan Korda*

Festival dates: June 11-15. Submission deadline: April 1. Categories: Young Filmmaker, College Filmmaker, Independent Filmmaker. Formats: 16mm prints only (no video even for selection purposes). Films must have been completed since April 1983. Contact: Mary Jane Coleman, Creekside Farm Rt. 8, Greenville, TN 37743; tel. (615) 638-6524. Mail entries to: Box 3253 Davy Crockett Station, Greenville, TN 37743. For program details, housing/registration info: Dean James Sandlin, Sarratt Student Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville TN 37240; tel. (615) 322-2471.

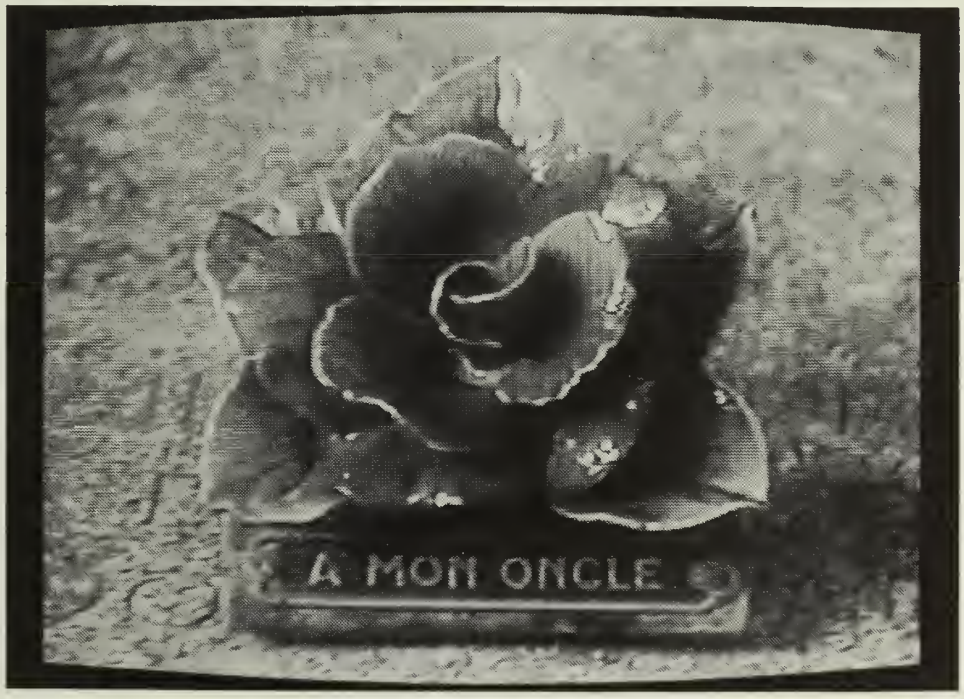
Susan Korda is an independent producer, director, and editor working in New York City.

BARNARD: CELLULOID SISTERS

Each year the Library Media Services of Barnard College sponsors a festival organized by women and presenting work by women directors. Last October, 14 films and tapes were shown at the 8th annual Works by Women Film and Video Festival, ranging from well-known directors like Diane Kurys and Max Almy to those premiering their first works.

According to Christina Bickford, the media services librarian and festival director, the festival's aim is to exhibit a diverse sampling of women's productions; in this, the festival succeeds very well, featuring documentaries, experimental works, animation, and drama. When the festival began in the late 1970s—as important new women's films like *With Babies and Banners* and *Union Maids* surfaced—the selections focused on women's themes. Since then, it has broadened in scope to embrace a wide spectrum of concerns. Last year's program included Julie Thompson's *Citizen: The Political Life of Allard K. Lowenstein; My Film, My Film, My Film,* by L. Bechtold, L. Keen and C. Kugel; and Mako Idemitsu's *Hideo, It's Me, Mama.*

The festival is programmed by the librarian's media services staff, with the consultation of the Barnard Women's Center and Columbia University faculty on an *ad hoc* basis. According to Bickford, the staff itself encompasses expertise in various aspects of the media. For example, Bickford sits on the jury of the American Film Festival, and her full-time assistant is videomaker Rii Kanzaki. Last year the entry fee-free open call for submissions drew approximately 200 films and tapes. The festival is not a competition and, as Bickford points out, "We're not attempting to give our stamp of approval,



Mary Lucier's romantic "Ohio to Giverny: Memory of Light" played to a captivated audience at Barnard.
Photo: Kevin Brunelle



camera obscura/12

Denise Mann *Staggering Toward Modern Times*
Interview with Max Almy *Leaving the 20th Century*
Meaghan Morris *Identity Anecdotes*
Dana Polan on Marie-Claire Ropars and Film Theory
Maureen Turim on J.-F. Lyotard *Desire in Art and Politics*
Jean-François Lyotard on the Post-Modern
Jonathan Rosenbaum on Sally Potter's *The Golddiggers*

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Kate Kline May's "Alice Underground" was screened at Barnard's Works by Women festival.
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but we try to select films for our direct audience—the Columbia and Barnard community." The festival pays rentals for selected works, and speakers are provided honoraria for personal appearances.

Mary Lucier, whose tape *Ohio to Giverny: Memory of Light* was screened, gave the programming approach high marks. "I thought it was very thoughtful," says Lucier. "For example, I was happy to be paired with *Seeds of Survival* [by Pamela Roberts], about the consequences of farm overproduction. It gave my tape an interesting ecology slant." Screenings are held at Barnard's New York City campus. Lucier, Maren Erskine (*Hell's Kitchen Chronicle*), and I all led discussions at the festival screenings and had extremely responsive and enthusiastic audiences. Erskine remembers, "The audience was incredibly visually bright. They were just very intelligent and asked very good questions." Erskine and Lucier also report good quality projection for both film and video.

Publicity is extensive throughout the Columbia University campus and around the city. According to Erskine, posters were completed at an early date, and she was given as many copies as she wanted.

Lucier said that the Works by Women festival is not a place to meet television buyers—but that it *is* enjoyable. Says Erskine, "It was a very pleasant experience." —*Phyllis Jeroslow*

The festival will again be held in October this year. Deadline for entries is March 31. Formats: 16mm and ¾" video. Contact: Christina Bickford, Media Services Librarian, Wollman Library, Barnard College, Columbia University, 606 W. 120th St., New York, NY 10027; tel. (212) 280-2418.

Phyllis Jeroslow is a Los Angeles documentary video/filmmaker whose work Of Grace and Steel was exhibited at the 1984 Works by Women festival.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson and Deborah Erickson. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement,** and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

● *ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES 12th ANNUAL STUDENT FILM AWARDS,* Los Angeles, June 16. Films completed after April 1984 within the context of an accredited U.S. college, university, film or art school in 16 or 35mm under 60 min. are eligible for awards in animation, documentary, dramatic & experimental. Deadline: April. Contact: Elaine Richard, 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211; tel. (213) 278-8990.

● *ARGUS VIDEO COMPETITION,* Minneapolis, May 28. "Amateurs, students & independents" invited to submit work for unspecified cash prizes & local cablecasting in any style, genre, or subject or in the "worst video" (read camp) category. An option on the application gives the festival permission to use your tape for any purpose whatsoever without compensation to you. Entry fee: $25/first tape, $15 thereafter. All video formats welcome, including film-to-tape transfers. Selection of submissions will be made available to cable access outlets nationwide. All entries receive "critique sheets." Deadline: April 30. Contact: Argus, c/o Phil Murre, 2411 NE Hayes St., Minneapolis, MN 55418; tel. (512) 789-2326.

● *FOCUS STUDENT FILM AWARDS:* Los Angeles, Sept. 5. Ninth festival sponsored by Nissan gives 20 awards in 8 categories for filmmaking & screenwriting totalling $60,000 in cash and cars. Winners flown to LA for 4-5 days. Deadline: April 19. Contact: Sam Katz, FOCUS, 1140 Ave of the Americas, NY, NY 10036; tel. (212) 575-0270.

● *HOMETOWN USA VIDEO FESTIVAL,* regional, July 11. Sponsored by the National Federal of Local Cable Programmers. Dual award certificates in 17 categories (including video art, several documentary areas, experimental) for volunteer & cable company staff-produced programs that have been shown on public access channels. Entries screened at 9 NFLCP regional sites; judges represent access centers, local origination channels, category specialists. Selected winners compiled for the Hometown USA Bicycle Package, rented to access centers nationwide, without compensation to the producers. Consideration given to works that address community concerns. ¾" only. Fees: $15 & $20. Deadline: March 31. Contact: Paul D'Ari, NFLCP, 906 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20003; tel. (202) 544-7272.

● *HOUSTON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* April 19-28. Houston touts itself as "regarded by the film world as one of the best run festivals," but we've heard many irate & woeful tales of non-existent receptions & seminars, inflated admission fees (especially for the Awards Gala, even for winning filmmakers), unpaid prize money & more. [For an in-depth report on this festival, see Lulu Lopez's report in the Jan./Feb. 1983 *Independent.*] The festival is, at least, receptive to independents. Enter with caution. (If you have anything good to say, we'll be glad to hear it.) Deadline: end of March. Contact: HIFF, Box 56566, Houston, TX 77256; tel. (713) 965-9955.

● *KENYON FILM FESTIVAL,* Ohio, April 19-20. The 19th annual edition invites independent films in 16mm under 60 min. to compete for over $700 in prizes. Faculty & student juries from Kenyon College & audience votes determine winners. Entry fee: $11. Deadline: April 1. Contact: Kenyon Film Festival '85, Box 17, Gambier, OH 43022; att.: Paul Cymbala, Jonah Madoff, Dirs.

● *NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN MEDIA,* Los Angeles, Aug. 23-28. Competition for $1,000 in 2 categories on subjects relating to psychology: News & Documentary, & Entertainment. Most of last year's 65 entries came from networks & public television, but independents were represented. Winners flown to annual American Psychological Association convention for awards reception. 1984 winner was *Healthbeat* series

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produced by Channel 5 in Boston. Work must have been released in 1984. Deadline: April 15. Notification by late July. Contact: Joanne Albanes, APA, 1200 17th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036; tel. (202) 955-7710.

● *NEW ENGLAND FILM FESTIVAL,* Boston, June. Limited to New England residents. This competition, in its 10th year, invites independent & student work in S-8 & 16mm. Prizes include $2,500 in cash & film materials. Winning films presented at the Berkeley Performance Center & the New England Arts Biennial. 1984 winners included Ted Lymon's experimental *FLA. ME.,* Karen Aqua's animated *Yours for the Taking,* Jackie Ochs's *The Secret Agent,* and Jem Cohen's *A Road to Fla.* Deadline: March 15. Contact: AES,. Division of Continuing Education, Univ. of Mass., Amherst, MA 01033; tel. (413) 545-2360.

● *NEW YORK CITY EXPERIMENTAL VIDEO & FILM FESTIVAL,* May & June. Original, abstract, unclassifiable & experimental films & video highlighted. Jury members in 3rd event last year included Reynold Weidenaar, Juan Downey & Ann-Sargent Wooster. Darrill Wilson's *Avian Moves, Secrets of Cindy,* by Cindy Kleine, and Ilene Segalove's *Why I Got Into TV and Other Stories* were screened in video format at New York's Millennium, Downtown Community TV & the Brooklyn Academy of Cultural Arts Downtown Center. Priority given to hybrid works combining film & video. Fee: $10. Deadline: March 31. Contact: Hunter Yoder, 331 Smith St., Brooklyn, NY 11231; tel. (718) 858-3140.

● *ROCHESTER FINGER LAKES EXPOSITION,* June. For upstate New York film & videomakers. Deadline: March 15–May 5. Contact: Maria Via, Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester, 490 University Ave., Rochester, NY 14607; tel. (716) 275-4775.

● *SIGGRAPH '85,* San Francisco, July 22–26. 12th annual conference on computer graphics & interactive techniques presents papers, courses, installations & film & video. "Anyone using computer graphics to produce video or film is encouraged to enter." Everyone will be there from Lucasfilm to Atari. Deadline: April 17. Contact: Siggraph '85 Conferences Office, Smith Bucklin and Assoc., 111 East Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60601; tel. (312) 644-6610.

● *SUFFOLK & NASSAU COUNTY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* New York, May–June. Open to work in numerous categories that relates to these Long Island counties, either by maker, locations or "roots." 20 winners divide $5,000 in cash & in-kind film services. Sponsored by Suffolk County Office of Economic Development, Motion Picture/TV Bureau. Deadline: April 30. Contact: Christopher Cooke, 4175 Veterans Memorial Highway, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779; tel. (516) 588-1000.

FOREIGN

● *CAMBRIDGE FILM FESTIVAL,* England, July. 45 films were unspooled in 1984 at 9th edition of this event, part of the longer-running Cambridge Arts Festival. Primarily for launching British pics, though last year they included, among others, Gregory Nava's *El Norte.* Contact: David Jakes, Tony Jones,

Dirs., Cambridge Festival Association, The Guild Hall, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England CB2 3QJ; tel. (223) 35 89 77.

● *COSTA BRAVA AMATEUR FILM FESTIVAL,* Spain, June. Running for over 20 years, for non-professionals with award-wining films in S-8 or 16mm produced within past 3 years. Contact: Agrupacio Fotografica y Cinematographica, Oficina Permanente del Festival Aunytamiento, San Felius de Guixois, Gerona, Spain; tel. (72) 32 00 29.

● *FLORENCE FILM FESTIVAL,* Italy, Oct. 31–Nov. 3. This features-only event, headed by Fabrizio Fiumi, occupies three theaters in Florence before going on the road to Rome each year. Specializing in progressive new material; independents encouraged to enter. According to Fiumi, "We are looking for work which is inventive & powerful, if not polished." In 1984 U.S. participation included Peter Stuart & Adam Small's *Another State of Mind,* Herbert Day's *Cafe Flesh,* Tony Garnett's *HandGun,* Eagle Pennell's *Last Night at the Alamo,* Jonathan Demme's *Stop Making Sense* (opening), Penelope Spheeris's *Suburbia,* Robert Young's *The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez,* and Bette Gordon's *Variety.* Catalogue in English & Italian; in '84 the festival produced a 320-page press clipping book. Exhibited prints subtitled by Fiumi's computerized "softitler" projection system, which does not mark the print. Fiumi visits the U.S. frequently & and has skedded the fest to follow next year's Independent Feature Project Market in New York. Address: Via Martini Del Popolo 27, 50122 Firenze, Italy; send Fiumi a letter about your film & he'll contact you; or tel. 055/240720-294105.

● *GOLDEN ROSE DE MONTREUZ,* Switzerland, May 8–15. 25th annual event is meetingplace for TV producers & programmers. Broadcast entries in field of light entertainment made since April eligible. According to John Nathan, fest's North American representative, there's a new competition for independents. Deadline: late March. Contact: John Nathan, Overseas Music and Video Services, 509 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10022; tel. (212) 223-0044.

● *GRIERSON DOCUMENTARY SEMINARS,* Toronto, November. 10th annual weeklong discussion & screening forum. Approximately 21 film & videomakers invited to present new work. Only 2 Americans will be invited. Entries in 35mm, 16mm or video. No fee. Deadline: April–June. Contact: Ontario Film Association, Box 366, Station Q, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M4T 2M5.

● *MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* June 28–July 12. This biennial ranks with Cannes, Berlin & Venice for prestige & commercial value on the festival circuit. Organized into three competitive categories (35mm features; shorts & documentaries; children's films) & many non-competitive sections. In 1983, festival presented 200 films from around the world and hosted 1,000 guests from 104 countries. Joan Harvey's *From Hitler to MX* was screened in the documentary competition; but for U.S. narrative features the interest is definitely on stars & big budgets. Major international market attracts buyers & distributors. Deadline: May 1. Contact: Y. Khodjaev, Director, Directorate of International Film Festivals, Sovinterfest, Sosinko of the USSR, 10 Khokhlovsky Per., Moscow 109028, USSR; tel. 297 76 45; telex 411263 fest SU.

● *MUNICH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* Germany, June 22-30. According to director Eberhard Hauff, attendance in 1984 doubled at this non-competitive expo to a staggering 45,000. '85 will only be the third year for what shapes up as an important venue for international cinema. Last year's sections included European Cinema (as home of the European Film Festival), Films by Women (including Dina & Marisa Silver's *Old Enough* & Penelope Spheeris's *Suburbia*), an American Independent Films section which numbered 11 features & 5 shorts, a Made in Texas section of 3 features & 5 shorts; a Robert Young retro, a children's film festival, a music fest (featuring U.S. selections by Alan Sacks (*du Beat-e-o*), Jonathan Demme's *Stop Making Sense,* Renee Cho's *Toshiko Akiyoshi: Jazz Is My Native Language,* and Robert Mugge's *Black Wax*). There was also an experimental section, a section for shorts & a series of special screenings. U.S. attendees included Young, Christian Blackwood, Spheeris, John Hanson of *Wildrose,* Mugge, Alexander Rockwell (*Hero*), Jackie Raynal (*Hotel New York*), & Marc Rance (*Death and the Singing Telegram*). Good press coverage & crowds make this a filmmaker's event. A market is planned for '85. Contact: Tim Ney, Independent Feature Project, 21 E 86th St., NY, NY 10024; tel. (212) 496-0909; in Germany: Turkenstrasse 93, 8000 Munich 40, W. Germany; tel. 089/39 3011-12; telex 5214674 imf d.

● *SALSOMAGGIORE FILM & TV FESTIVAL,* Italy, April. This festival has of late been emphasizing video; everything from *Saturday Night Live* to a selection from the Kitchen in NY was included last year. Prior years included Amos Poe's *Subway Riders,* Jim Jarmusch's *Permanent Vacation* & Sarah Driver's *You Are Not I.* Buyers & distributors from Europe attend; U.S. participation limited to a selection of about 40 films. Contact: Via del Tritone 61, 00187 Roma, Italy, or Via Petrarca 13A, 43100 Parma, Italy.

● *SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL,* Australia, June 7–23. Director Rod Webb will again visit the U.S. to find independent work for the "Alternatives" section as well as the main program for this festival's 32nd edition. *Seeing Red, Love in Vain, Black Wax, When the Mountains Tremble, The Secret Agent, Style Wars, Dummy Love in the Atomic Age, Stranger Than Paradise, Miraj, Hotel New York, Burroughs, Variety,* and the 18-minute 1st prize winner *Aqui Se Lo Halla,* by Lee Sokol, were among shorts & features screened in '84. Sydney is a good place to have your work seen by distributors, buyers & other festival directors. Bids were made for some U.S. product last year. Applications available at AIVF (send SASE). Deadline: April 1. Film deadline: May 8. Contact: Sydney Film Festival, Box 25, P.O. Gelbe, N.S.W., Australia 2037; tel. 02 660 3844; telex, 75111.

● *TAORMINA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* Italy, July. Last year's American Film Week highlighted only major Hollywood productions, from *Splash* to *Beat Street,* although Marva Nabili's *Nightsongs* was entered in the competition. Most films shown have or are about to get Italian theatrical release. Taormina is a vacation resort town in Sicily which attracts the Italian industry on holiday. Contact: Festival delle Nazione Taormina, Via Calabria, Isol 301-bis, Ente Provinciale del Turismo, Messina, Italy, or: Dir. Guglielmo Biraghi, Via P.S. Macini #12, Roma Italy.

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IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION

Mary Guzzy



Actor Maxwell Alexander contemplates the possibility of self-determination for his morning foodstuffs in "Get To Know Your Breakfast," a 4-minute, 35mm color film recently completed by William Engeler and James Kafador of Funnyworld Films.



"Breaking Silence," a documentary about incest and child abuse, was awarded the Bronze Hugo at the 1984 Chicago International Film Festival. It was produced and directed by Theresa Tollini of Future Educational Films, Inc. in Berkeley, California.

Placing personal and artistic vision in a larger political context, "Coalfields," Bill Brand's 39-minute visual landscape, centers on the mining country of West Virginia and the story of coal miner and black lung activist Fred Carter. The soundtrack employs the poetry of Kimiko Hahn and music by Earl Howard. Pictured right is a painting by David "Blue" Lamm, used in the film.





Sput, a member of the Electric Force break dancers, does a star turn with his partner while graffiti artists Pete Friedrich and Julie Jigsaw put the finishing touches on an atomic mural in Stan Davis and Joan Jubela's soon-to-be-released video short, "Bombs Aren't Cool." A street rap music soundtrack completes the 5-minute package.

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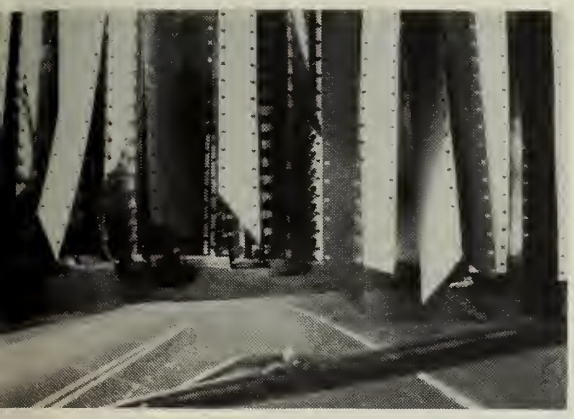
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Is it the spectre of home movies hanging over the windshields of this traveler's mind? Barbara Hammer's film, "Tourist," explores the perceptions of the spectator in an unfamiliar environment. Both "Tourist" and another recent work, "Parisian Blinds," will be screened at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, June 5-9.



Alex Faust (Alain Cloarec) confronts closet vigilante Merce (Dan Moser) in "Made for TV," a 16-minute comedy film written, directed and produced by Jaime Hellman about a man who moves his family to Pleasantville, New York, only to discover life there bears a disturbing resemblance to a made-for-TV movie. The film has already gamered several festival awards and been licensed for cablecast by the "Culture Shock" series in Middleburg, Virginia.



All photos courtesy filmmakers



Former MIT chemist and computer programmer James Parks explains Ohm's Law to a group of Nepalese students in their mud and stone classroom. Parks, who left the professional world in 1982 to become a volunteer math and science teacher in the village of Melung, is the subject of "Jimi Sir: Melung's Window on the West," a 58-minute documentary by Claude von Roesgenof of Burnside Productions.

NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others included as space permits. Send Notices to: **THE INDEPENDENT**, c/o FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, attn.: Notices. For further information, call: (212) 473-3400. Deadline: 8th of second preceding month (e.g. March 8 for the May issue). Edited by Debra Payne.

Buy ● Rent ● Sell

● *FOR SALE:* Beaulieu 6008 Pro w/Schneider 6–70 fl. 4 zoom lens. 2 external battery packs w/recharging unit. Tiffen filters, Tamron c-mount adapter. Spectra Pro light meter. All like new. $1750. Karyl-Lynn Zietz, Kope Productions, Box 40827, Palisades Sta., Washington DC 20016, (202) 686-0898.

● *FOR RENT:* 6-Plate & 8-Plate Steenbecks. Delivered to your location. Octavio Molina, (718) 855-8366, NY.

● *FOR SALE/RENT:* Used Sony M-3 camera, 4800 deck w/BVU modification, CECO fluidhead tripod, $200/day, w/technician, mikes, lights, & monitor available. Eclair ACL 16mm camera w/12-120 Ang. lens & Nagra III w/crystal sync. (212) 982-6054, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* 9.5–5.7 w/CA-1 mount. Mark, (212) 679-4300, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* J&K optical printer w/own sequencer, Super-8 & 16mm modules, mint condition, $2700. Bolex Rx 5, $700. Pan Cinor Berthiot Vari Switar 17–85 zoom, w/viewfinder, $400. Bolex 16mm matte box, $190. (212) 677-2181, eves. (212) 924-2254, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Arri II-B package. Variable-speed motor, 7 magazines, 400′ & 200′, sharp lenses, lens shade w/filter holders, filters, orig. cases. Nicad batteries & chargers, original, 2 Arri II-B tripods, long legs & baby legs, mint condition. 16mm camera, both single system & double system w/Nagra. 2400′ magazines, 12–120 Angenieux zoom, batt. & AC. Nagra III w/many additional factory-made features, e.g. built-in mike for slates. Many accessories & adaptors. Sony video camera 1640 in case, Sony VO 4800 deck, mint condition. Best offer. Ron, (212) 928-6494, (212) 662-5364, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* ACL mint cond. Kinoptic rotating finder, 2-400′ & 1-200′ mags. 9.5-95mm, battery, $6500. ACL excellent cond. w/CP motor, 2-400′ & 2-200′ mags, 9.5–5.7mm battery, $6500. Moviola 86AH flatbed, flickerless prism, instant start/stop, perfect cond. $11,000. (206) 285-3057, WA.

● *FOR SALE:* Moviola M77 model, 6-plate, solid prism, quick stop circuit. Recently overhauled & cleaned. $6000. (207) 235-8506, ME.

● *FOR SALE:* 6-plate Steenbeck model ST-900W, excellent cond., $8000 (includes delivery); Arri BL w/2-400′ mags, Ang 12–120, case, good cond, $2000. JK K-103 optical printer w/animation motor & quartz light, rotoscope mirror, excellent cond., $2000. Dan Curry, (616) 454-8910, MI.

● *FOR SALE:* Nizo S480 S-8 camera /Schneider fl. 8 8–48mm power zoom lens, auto-dissolve, fade in/out, slo-mo, time-lapse, single-frame, variable shutter & adjustable diopter eyepiece. Best offer. David, (212) 927-5363, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Beaulieu 5008 multispeed S-8 sound camera. Brand new. Features: Schneider optics, F/1.4 6–70mm zoom lens, power zoom w/manual override, automatic exposure control system w/manual override, sync capability, comes w/NICAD battery recharger. $500 or best offer. (212) 228-2178, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Beaulieu 16mm movie camera/power pack, charger & case. 75mm Var 1:2.5 lens, 25mm Lytar 1:1.9 lens, 10mm Switar 1:1.6 lens. $1500 for package; will sell separately. (215) 249-3676, PA.

● *FOR RENT:* Large, open space/film theater available for screenings, meetings, etc. Reasonable rates. Robin Dickie, Collective for Living Cinema, (212) 925-3926, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* 35 sealed 400′ rolls, Eastman Kodak 7247 negative raw stock (stored in freezer); Eclair ACL 200′. Best offer. (914) 452-5807, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* 6-plate flatbeds; 10 left on a limited offer purchase, $3000 each. Scott Frank, (212) 431-3370, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Oxberry animation table stand, model LC-3 w/motorized extension dual bars model S-C; 16mm camera, lights, Acme registration punch, $11,995. 16mm Auricon Super 1200 camera, TVT shutter, filmagnetic; 17–85 Pan Cinor lens, 1200′ magazine; complete $1295. D4 Film Studios, (617) 444-0226, MA.

● *FOR SALE:* 16mm footage, Midland nuclear plant abandonment announcement (7/16/84); Midwest Freeze Rally, Chicago (10/13/84) w/speeches by Harold Washington, Helen Caldicott, & Jesse Jackson; Geraldine Ferraro at MSU (11/4/84). Color negative, sound. Paul Hart, News on Film, 625 Division, E. Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 351-2603.

● *FOR SALE:* Mitchell 1200′ mag & A&J hard shipping case, like new, $400. 3 Mitchell 400′ mags, $100 each. Frenzel double shoulder pod for 16mm camera, $200. Diane or Bob, (716) 885-9777, NY.

Conferences ● Workshops

● *13th ANNUAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY RESEARCH CONFERENCE:* April 21–24, at Airlie House in Airlie, VA. Conference topic: "Equity: Social & Economic Issues." Contact: James Miller, Conference Chair, Hampshire College, School of Communications & Cognitive Science, Amherst, MA 01002.

● *RE-THINKING THE SPECTATOR: GENDER, HISTORY, THEORY:* 4th annual symposium of film theory at the Whitney Humanities Center, Yale Univ., March 29 & 30. Invited participants include Laura Mulvey, E. Ann Kaplan, Noel Carroll, Philip Rosen, Mary Ann Doane, Kaja Silverman, Janet Staiger, Janet Bergstrom. Contact: Shira Wolosky, Ass. Dir., Whitney Humanities Center, 53 Wall St., Yale Univ., New Haven, CT 06520, (203) 436-0123.

● *KUNST MIT EIGEN-SINN:* International exhibition of recent art by women in Vienna, Austria, March 29–May 12. Accompanying symposium planned for March 29, 30, & 31. For information on programs (symposium, film, video, performance), contact: Museum Moderner Kunst, Museum d. 20 Jahrhunderts, Schweizergarten, A-1030, Wein, Austria.

● *11th L.A. PROFESSIONAL VIDEOSHOW & VIDEO PRODUCTION CONFERENCE:* Long Beach Convention Center, May 20–23. Accompanying events include Independent Video Festival & meetings of the Los Angeles ITVA. Contact: Lisa Welp, The Professional Videoshow, 51 Sugar Hollow Rd., Danbury, CT 06810, (203) 743-2120.

● *LEARN TO ANIMATE ON A MICROCOMPUTER:* Janet Benn teaches classes in Moviemaker software on Atari 800s at Computer Arts Forum (affiliated w/Pratt). MVM I is basic course; MVM II covers longer projects & video production procedures. Janet, (212) 966-1487, NY, or (201) 659-0322, NJ.

● *TELEVISION & VIDEO INSTRUCTION:* Classes offered at The Video Study Center, NYC. Made-for-TV video workshop, computer editing workshop, advanced computer editing, intensive workshop in video electronics, FCC license. Jim Reaven, Video Study Center, Global Village, 454 Broome St., NY, NY 10013, (212) 966-7526.

● *VIDEO WORKSHOPS:* Center for New Television, Chicago, IL. March: Music video seminar; editing, part 2; basic production; editing part 1; editing theory. April: one-camera portable production: script to screen. (312) 565-1787.

● *FILM WORKSHOPS:* Lighting, optical printing, sound recording. All offered in March. Collective for Living Cinema, (212) 925-3926, NY.

Editing Facilities

● *JVC/CONVERGENCE HIGH-SPEED EDITING:* System w/ fades & time code reading, generating & window-dubs; also computer w/authentic CMX list management program for effects transitions in CMX code, auto-renumbering & list cleaning. Sophisticated character generator w/ graphics capability. Everything $20/hr. w/ editor. Bob Wiegand, (212) 925-6059, NY.

● *EDITING ROOM:* 6-plate Steenbeck, large room, fully equipped, 24-hr. access, telephone, special low rates for independents. Bob Mack Productions, (212) 736-3074, NY.

● *NEW HORIZON STUDIOS:* Off-line editing in comfortable surroundings. Convenient midtown location. Includes Tapehandlers w/ new RM866U, TBC, 3M proc, waveform, Ikegami title camera, CG, 16 ch. audio mixing, JVC KM 2000 SEG, chroma key, time code capability. $90/hr. (212) 490-9082, NY.

● *SOHO FILM EDITING ROOM:* For rent, warm & comfortable cutting room complete w/6-plate, reel to reel & other accessories. 24 hr. access, fully equipped, telephone, refrigerator. Extremely inexpensive. Scott Frank, (212) 431-3370, NY.

● *NEGATIVE MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut at reasonable rates. Bruce, (212) 228-7352, NY.

● *REGULAR & S-8 FILM-TO-VIDEO TRANSFER:* Professional quality, industrial or broadcast. Landy, 400 E. 83rd St., #4A, NYC 10028, (212) 734-1402.

● *EDITING ROOM:* ¾″ and VHS-to-¾″ w/Convergence Super 90, tapehandlers, Adda TBC, time

code reader-generator, fades, overdubs. New equipment, Lincoln Center area. $20/hr. during business hours for AIVF members editing noncommercial projects. Also available: editors, scripting, Chyron. Hank Domatch, TV Enterprises, (212) 874-5424, NY.

Films ● Tapes Wanted

● *FILM FOOTAGE:* Anything re: John Lennon's death, Ronald Reagan. Paul Hart, 625 Division, E. Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 351-2603.

● *LEISURE TIMES:* Weekly hr.-long entertainment program aired on local access channel in Litchfield county, seeks high quality shorts under 10 mins. on ¾" or VHS video for broadcast. Any subject matter. No pay but work will be viewed by approximately 15,000 viewers. Tapes returned after broadcast. Send tapes & release to: Leisure Times, c/o Generic Films, Inc., Box 2715, Waterbury, CT 06723, Attn: Gorman Bechard, (203) 756-3017.

● *OUTREACH DEPARTMENT OF CENTER FOR AFRICAN ART:* Looking for recent films & video on Africa. Send info to: Kate Renner & Tom Wheelock, Center for African Art, 54 E. 68th St., NYC 10021, (212) 861-1200.

● *VIDEO ART SHOWCASE:* Soon-to-be weekly feature on Manhattan Cable TV, seeks innovative programming from video/computer artists. V.A.S., 451 Broome St., 5W, NYC 10013; Attn: Gil Shaar, Programming.

● *INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION ARTS:* NY-based video/computer arts distribution network now accepting material for representation. Send description & format to: I.T.V.A., 799 Broadway, Suite 325, NYC 10013; Attn: Jim Wiener.

● *RADICAL GUERRILLA THEATER:* Looking for films, tapes & stills of following New York-based groups which 1 participated in from 1966-1969: the Sixth Street Theatre, the Pageant Players, Radical Theatre Repertory. Also reviews, posters, etc. covering any such groups, active during the period. Allan Tobias, 35 Orange St., Brooklyn, NY 11201.

● *NEW AGE MARKETING:* We help video producers who have no national distributors find shelf space in video & other retail outlets in the San Francisco area. Manufacturers representative on a commission-only basis. Nick Yale, New Age Marketing, 257 Clinton Park, San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 621-6142.

● *EBONY EYES CINEMA:* Exhibition, distribution & production of independent progressive, African &/or international film. We need catalogues, brochures, & other information/promotion materials to develop an exhibition schedule, promote theater & initiate & develop our market & marketing strategy. Contact: Njia Kai Shingirai, 11355 Asbury Park, Detroit, MI 48227, (313) 835-2968.

● *INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTOR:* Seeks nonfiction programming for international TV market, especially sports footage. Minimum length: 30 min. Ruth J. Feldman, 1433 10th St., #7, Santa Monica, CA 90401, (213) 394-2984.

● *EDUCATIONAL FILMS & TAPES:* For distribution to the school market (elementary–college). Programs marketed individually to specifically targeted audiences. Company has record of high print sales. Length preferred: 15–30 min. Send complete program description to: Circle Oak Production, 260 Katonah Ave., Katona, NY 10536 , (914) 232-9551.

Freelancers

● *VIDEOGRAPHER:* W/new Sony DXC-M3 & broadcast gear ready to shoot news, documentary, dance & other subjects. Full ENG package & crew as needed; rates negotiable. L. Goodsmith, (212) 989-8157, NY.

● *ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATE PRODUCER, PRODUCTION COORDINATOR:* Capable, experienced, seeks film & video work on independent narratives & documentaries; rates negotiable. R. Kormos, (212) 460-8921, NY.

● *MUSIC DIRECTOR:* Experienced composer available for film & video scores. Library or original music, all styles. (718) 965-2178, NY.

● *BILINGUAL SPANISH-ENGLISH VIDEOGRAPHER & CREW:* Available w/broadcast quality package. Will travel. Rate negotiable. Octavio Molina, 177 Water St., Brooklyn, NY 11201, (718) 855-8366.

● *WRITER/PRODUCTION ASST:* 6 yrs. experience writing, some production. Eager to learn all aspects of film/video production, B.S. in mass communications. Valerie Piotrowiski, 698 Westmeve Rd., Des Plaines, IL 60016, (312) 437-6342.

● *SOUND RECORDIST:* W/equipment available for work on docs, low budget features & shorts. Film & video. Negotiable rates. Eliza, (212) 620-5779, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER:* Available w/CP-16 & Arri 16BL packages; Nagra w/mikes, lighting kit, 6-plate editing console & mini-van for camera crew. Reasonable rates/special rates for documentaries. Bilingual (English-Italian, some Spanish). Renato Tonelli, (718) 236-0153, NY.

● *PRODUCTION ASST:* Available for line production work, research & writing. New York attorney. Able to assist in development, distribution arrangements & any production assistant work. (212) 873-5866, NY.

● *MUSIC VIDEO PRODUCER/EDITOR:* Award-winning video producer & music video seminar instructor at the Center for New Television, Chicago, is interested in working on creative video/film projects. Show reel & portfolio available. Donald Howze, (312) 846-6199, IL.

● *VIDEO RECORDIST:* Looking for work on feature/documentary as recordist/boom/audio asst. No rock, no freebies. Doug Tourtelot, (212) 489-0232, NY.

● *ARTIST:* Available for storyboard work, fast, dependable. Susan, (212) 252-7851, NY.

● *ANIMATOR:* Experienced working w/independents; title design, character animation a specialty. Reasonable rates for reasonable schedules. Sample reel. John Baumann, (212) 533-4705, (212) 254-6300, ext. 294, 331, NY.

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● *APPRENTICE/ASST. EDITOR:* Freelancing in Boston, 1984 Emerson College grad. Very organized, willing to work long hours for low pay in exchange for experience. Will relocate. D. Caruso, 19 Prescott St., Newton MA 02160, (617) 969-6804.

● *ART DIRECTION, SET DRESSING, PROPS:* I would like to help design your production. Reasonable rates. Resume & portfolio available. Eva, (212) 724-3879, NY.

● *EDITING/PRODUCTION/RESEARCH ASSISTANT.:* Varied professional experience in all aspects of film/video production. Anthropological field work. Rates negotiable. Debbie Bergman, (212) 228-3515, NY.

Opportunities ● Gigs

● *PRODUCTION STAFF WANTED:* For summer '85 shoot of an O. Henry short story, *The Green Door.* Want P.M., A.D., D.P., editor & sound. Tom Fonatan, Marfon Productions, (212) 581-5457, NY.

● *VECINO/NEIGHBOR BRIGADE:* A community-to-community project will assist residents of Nicaragua in construction of daycare center/health clinic. Brigade will consist of 10–15 people, including children, scheduled to depart June 1985, for 6 wks. Looking for filmmakers &/or videographers to document this event, preferably Spanish-speaking (bilingual), who can pay their own way & assist in fundraising for the media project. Kendall Hale, 121 Fisher Ave., Roxbury, MA 02120, (617) 731-1590, MA.

● *WANTED:* Screenplays, books, stories, plays for motion pictures, TV. Professional evaluations by ex-studio story consultants (Orion & Filmways). Qualifying manuscripts offered sales, development deals, referrals to major literary agents. Flaming Rose Prods., 770 Princeton Ave., Metedoconk, NJ 08724, (201) 892-5552.

● *VIDEO ARTIST IN RESIDENCE FOR 1984–1985:* Work w/museum in teaching video to young adults & work on special projects. Residency requires 40% of time directed to museum-related projects & 60% to artist's own work. Hrs. to be arranged. Stipend $6000. Send cover letter & resume to: Philip Verre, Chief Curator, Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10456.

● *CAMERAMAN/PRODUCER:* Wanted for documentary in Egypt, early fall 1985. Must have experience. (319) 277-8090, FL.

Publications

● *THE VIDEO REGISTER 1984–1985:* 7th edition. 8 directories, $29.95. Includes over 3200 professional television facilities in industry, medicine, cable, religion, government & education in the U.S.; 940 production/postproduction facilities & roster of consultants, equipment dealers & manufacturers, program publishers & distributors. 434 pp.; $54.50. Knowledge Industry Publications, 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604; (800) 248-KIPI (toll-free); NY State (914) 328-9157.

● *TV MOVIES:* Published every other year; now lists over 16,000 films—theatrical releases & made-for-TV movies. Rates each film, short critique & list of data such as director, cast, yr. of release & country of origin. $9.95. New American Library, 1633 Broadway, NYC 10019.

● *JOBS IN THE ARTS & ARTS ADMINISTRATION:* 12-pp. booklet listing souces for employment in the arts. Identifies national & regional sources for career counseling, job placement & job referral, as well as newsletters & other periodicals that regularly carry arts-related employment listings. $4.00. Rebecca Lewis, Center for Arts Information, 625 Broadway, NYC 10012; (212) 677-7548.

● *THE CENTER QUARTERLY:* Pays writers honorarium of $100 for published articles. Text should be approximately 2,000 words, typed, double-spaced. Quarterly, information for arts professionals regarding Catskill Center for Photography exhibits, screenings, lectures, workshops; articles on significant contemporary & historical issues in photography and film. (914) 679-9957, NY.

● *PRACTICAL AV/VIDEO BUDGETING:* By Richard E. Van Deusen, shows how 5 types of cost allocation systems allocate both indirect costs (salaries, rent & other overhead) & direct costs (payments made directly to outside suppliers) & how these costs are used. $34.95. 168 pp. Knowledge Industry Publications, 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604.

● *CPB PUBLICATION ON EDUCATION & TELECOMMUNICATIONS: Guidelines for the Design, Production, Development & Use of a Telecommunications Program in Schools.* Curriculum & school adoption theory intended for professionals who make & execute decisions that affect school curricula. $5.00 (no charge to public broadcasting entities). (202) 955-5166, DC.

● *B.S.P.:* Belgian independent bimonthly magazine on non-conventional music. Encourages isolated genuine initiatives, national or international, in jazz, rock, ethnic/traditional music, improvised/contemporary/intuitive music, new music, etc. Alain Croibien, 11, rue de l'Ecole, 40501 Strivay, Belgium.

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● *CHECKERBOARD FOUNDATION VIDEO GRANT:* $5000 grant to NY State video artist. Funds must be used for postproduction purposes. Deadline: March 31. Columbus Circle Station, Box 20416, NYC 10023.

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● *CPB MINORITIES'/WOMEN'S GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS:* Applications for 1985–1986, Public Broadcast Management at Ohio University are being accepted. 1-yr. master's degree program in telecommunications management. Fellowships include $10,000 stipend plus tuition for 4 academic quarters. Ohio Univ. also awards associateships of $5000 under the program. Deadline: March 1, 1985. Dr. Charles Clift, Graduate Coordinator, School of Telecommunications, RTVC 253B, Ohio University, Athens, OH 45701, (614) 594-6036.

Trims ● Glitches

● *CONGRATULATIONS TO:* AIVF members whose projects were selected for funding by the Film Fund. *How to Prevent a Nuclear War,* by Liane Brandon, $2000; *When the Waters Rise,* by Jeffrey Chester, $1500; *Crossing Borders,* by Barbara Laing, $7000; *Dr. Charlie Clements,* by Deborah Shaffer, $5000; *Far from Poland,* by Jill Godmillow, $10,000; *I Be Done Been Was Is,* by Debra Robinson, $5000; *It's a Hit,* by Karen Lehman, $3500; *A Video Potrait of Doris Chase,* by Robin Schanzenbach, $2500; *Rated X,* by Lucy Winer, $8000; *Stephanie,* by Peggy Stern, $3500; *Take Back the Night,* by Meri Weingarten, $3500; *Adopted Son: The Murder of Vincent Chin,* by Renee E. Tajima, $7000.

● *CPB OPEN SOLICITATIONS:* First round 1985, 18 projects selected for funding by Program Fund of CPB (12 independent projects & 6 public television station productions): *Charlotte Forten's Mission,* Past American, Miami FL; *Electric Spell,* Tatge Productions/WNET, NYC; *About Tap,* Folk Traditions, NYC; *Doctor Death,* Third Floor Productions, NYC; *Langston Hughes,* New York Center for Visual History, NYC; *The Hidden Minority,* WQED, Pittsburgh, PA; *Miles Ahead: A Salute to Miles Davis,* WNET-TV, NYC; *Storme: A Life in the Jewel Box,* Eye of the Storm Productions, DC; *Beirut: The Last Home Movie,* Zohe Film Productions, NYC; *Fortieth Anniversary—Hiroshima/Nagasaki Bomb Attack,* KCTS/York/Wiley Productions, DC; *Central America and the Caribbean: Roots of the Crisis,* Blackwell Corp., Reston, VA/WGBH, Boston; *Owl TV,* National Audubon Society Productions, DC; *Latin America: The Turning Point,* Latin American Project, NYC; *International TV Revue,* ETV Endowment of S. Carolina, Columbia, SC; *The Mark Twain Series: Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,* Great Amwell Co., NYC.

● *CONGRATULATIONS TO:* AIVF member Michael Marton, on receiving first prize in the Golden Ring, a sports program competition held in Lausanne, Switzerland for his documentary, *Watch Me Now,* a profile of Cus D'Amato's boxing gym in the Catskills.

● *CONGRATULATIONS TO:* AIVF members Richard Schmiechen and Robert Epstein whose film *The Times of Harvey Milk* was voted best documentary of 1984 by the New York Film Critics Circle.

● *CONGRATULATIONS TO:* AIVF member George Corsetti for winning an NEA/AFI regional fellowship for his videotape *Poletown Lives!.*

■ ERRATUM

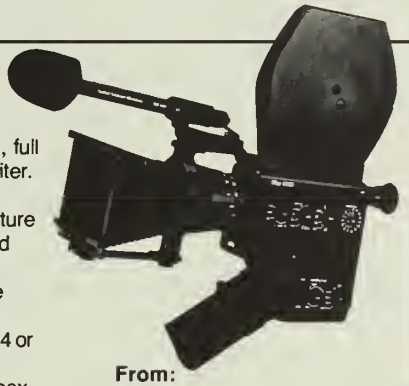
In the "Resources/Funds" section of the "Notices" column in our January/February issue (p. 67), we erroneously wrote that New York State residents are eligible for the New England Film/Video Regional Fellowship Program. They are not. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

NIZO 6080

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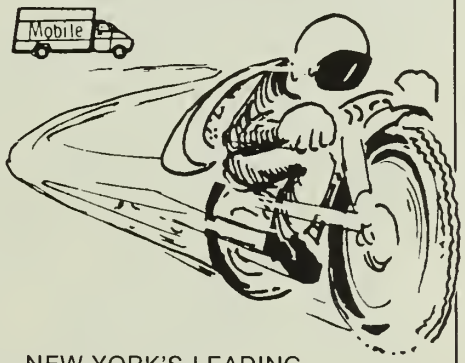
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FILIPINO FILMMAKERS ARRESTED

Filipino film directors Lino Brocka and Behn Cervantes were arrested on January 28 at a jitney drivers' demonstration in Manila, according to Ninotchka Rosca of the Filipino Writers in North America. The two were charged with illegal assembly and subversion under Presidential Decree 1834; the maximum punishment is death. Brocka and Cervantes had been asked by the Association of Concerned Transport Operators, the drivers' union, to participate in negotiations with the police, who had been trying to prevent the rally from taking place.

Brocka is best known in this country for his films *Bona* and *My Country*, which won the 1984 London Film Festival award for best foreign film. Cervantes is primarily a stage director, and produced the feature film *Fagada*.

The Filipino Writers in North America asks members of the film community to call for the filmmakers' release by writing to the local Philippine consulate; to President Ferdinand Marcos, Malacanang Palace, Manila, Philippines; or to Juan Ponce Enrile, Minister of Defense, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, Philippines.

SOMETHING FOR (ALMOST) NOTHING

AIVF is pleased to be the recipient of an in-kind donation of 600 copies of the *1984 Producer's Masterguide* from publisher Shmuel Bension. This 770-page manual contains extensive current information on areas of the film and television industry such as unions, labs, postproduction facilities, video facilities, agents, production companies, accountants, personnel, service organizations, and more. Twenty states are covered, as well as the Virgin Islands, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The guide retails for about $80.00.

AIVF will send you this valuable production resource for a $10.00 shipping and handling fee (limit: one book per member). We will send the four-lb. book to you via UPS.

Send your check to AIVF, Masterguide, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012 by Feb. 1, 1985. Recipients of the *Masterguide* will then be selected by lottery so that all members have an equal chance. (Should we run out, checks will be returned promptly.)

FIVF THANKS . . .

Prescott Jennings III, Glen Head, NY, for his generous donation.

HELP WANTED

AIVF needs volunteers to videotape the 10th Anniversary Celebration to be held June 4 at the Museum of Modern Art (see below). AIVF will provide tape; volunteers should supply their own equipment. If interested, contact: Lawrence Sapadin, AIVF, (212) 473-3400.

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Thanks to the AIVF members who took out congratulations ads in our 10th Anniversary issue of *The Independent*. The special 70-page issue would not have been possible without your support.

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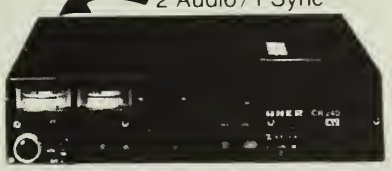
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FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT
APRIL 1985
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 3

Publisher: Lawrence Sapadin
Editor: Martha Gever
Associate Editors: Susan Linfield
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Deborah Erickson
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Fenton Johnson
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Toni Treadway
Art Director: Bethany Eden Jacobson
Advertising: Barbara Spence; Marionette, Inc. (718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBoer 113 E. Center St., Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeezo Typography
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a not-for-profit, tax-exempt educational foundation dedicated to the promotion of video and film, and by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc. (AIVF), the national trade association of independent producers and individuals involved in independent video and film. Subscription is included with membership in AIVF. Together, FIVF and AIVF provide a broad range of educational and professional services for independents and the general public. Publication of **The Independent** is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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COVER:
Wars are fought with guns–and information, whether conveyed through word-of-mouth, books, newspapers, posters, radio broadcasts, films, or videotapes. Jane Creighton's article, "Freedom of Information Acts," examines the history, achievements, and goals of El Salvador's insurgent filmmakers, the Radio Venceremos Film Collective.
Photo El Salvador Film and Video

THE HIGH COST OF GIVING

Every year, the Internal Revenue Service fiddles with the tax system, introducing new deductions while disallowing others. In the last 12 months, however, talk has been about tax revision, a complete rethinking of the system we've learned to live with, if not love. In Congress, the leading Democratic and Republican tax reform bills are each co-sponsored by "presidential hopefuls," Bill Bradley and Jack Kemp. But it was when the Treasury Department presented its own plan for simplifying taxes that speculation about reform turned serious—and, for the nation's non-profit sector, worrisome. For one of the unique features of the Administration's proposal is a proposed cutback in the deductions allowed for charitable giving.

The Treasury Department proposal collapses the 13 current graduated tax rates, which range from 11 percent to 50 percent, into three rates: 15 percent, 25 percent and 35 percent. To compensate for lowering the top rate, the proposal seeks to limit deductions and exemptions. These twin aspects of reform make it "revenue neutral": it will supposedly neither raise nor lower the amount of money collected. However, the proposal acknowledges what the general public has long known: the wealthy are officially obligated to turn over 50 percent of their incomes to Uncle Sam, but never do. They have the disposable income to buy tax deductions and exemptions and thus lower their tax liability. Should tax reform succeed, its proponents say, the rich will be taxed at a lower rate, but they will at least have to pay that rate.

Although tax reform would supposedly mean little to individual taxpayers, it would have a huge impact on those institutions, industries, and businesses that depend on the dollars tax deductions send their way. Prominent among them are charitable institutions, which have benefitted from charitable deductions since 1917. A study commissioned by Independent Sector, an umbrella organization representing 595 non-profit associations, philanthropies, and fundraising organizations, found that the Treasury proposal, simply by lowering the top tax rate and thus reducing the incentive to give, will cost charities $6-billion to $7-billion per year. Additional limits on charitable deductions will amount to another $5-billion in lost contributions. It seems inconsistent for the Administration to call on private charities to take up the slack created by gutted entitlement programs on the one hand and then attack those charities' sources of revenue on the other. But consistency is obviously not a big factor in President Reagan's appeal to the electorate.

The proposed changes in allowable charitable deductions that worry non-profits are the following:

From their total contributions, donors will be able to deduct only the portion that *exceeds* two percent of their adjusted gross income. The average taxpayer's donations now equal 1.97 percent.

The right of non-itemizing taxpayers to deduct charitable gifts, which became law in 1982, will be eliminated. The majority of taxpayers do not itemize.

Deductions of gifts of property will be limited to the owner's original cost, plus inflation. At present donors can deduct such gifts at their current market value. The exception is those cases in which current market value is *lower* than original cost.

Alarmed non-profit groups are striking back by mounting a letter-writing campaign aimed at the White House. The United Way of America (the Exxon of the charitable world) has mobilized its 2,200 affiliates and the 37,000 agencies it serves; and the result, reports Julee Kryder-Coe, assistant director of government relations for Independent Sector, is "a lot of mail. We have heard reports that the President is at least reconsidering the two percent floor, and he may drop that provision before the proposal reaches Congress."

Among arts institutions, however, it is the provision reducing the tax value of gifts of property that strikes a nerve. Cultural institutions are among the major recipients of such gifts, which include stocks, real estate, and paintings among the financial vehicles. "Its effects would burden arts organizations and universities disproportionately to other groups dependent on charitable contributions," Anne Murphy, executive director of American Arts Alliance, warned organization members in a December memo.

Tax reform fever comes just when arts organizations are geting zapped in that other fiscal war, the battle of the budget. The White House has already announced its intention to cut funds for the National Endowment for the Arts [see "Media Clips," *The Independent,* March 1985]. Another program under fire is the Postal Revenue Foregone Subsidy, which Congress provides to make up the difference between what non-profits pay for third-class bulk mail and what such mailings actually cost. In 1985, after the February postal rate hike, this subsidy will amount to $981-million; the Administration wants to eliminate it for all groups except libraries and organizations for the blind. According to Lee Kessler, AAA deputy director, this cutback will hit arts organizations harder than other charitable groups. "Most charities use third-class mail to fundraise. But our groups use it both to fundraise and to communicate with the community. They use it to publicize their programs, which are an important source of earned income." Should the Reagan Administration have its way, Kessler claims, the cost of such publicity will more than double.

These imminent threats dictate an immediate response: fight the budget cuts and changes in charitable deductions. On the tax issue, at least, non-profits will be happy to learn that their position is a popular one. No less an authority than a *New York Times*/CBS poll reports that 81 percent of respondees favor retention of deductions for giving. Non-profit groups, thus far the victims of the Reagan ethos, are for once in sync with the national mood. According to the get-the-government-off-our-backs school, private giving should be encouraged; it's the democratic way to let individuals, voting with their dollars, decide what causes are worthy, without interference from bureaucrats, panels of experts, and noisy constituencies asserting their right to be funded. This popular sentiment may save charitable deductions when Congress considers tax reform proposals.

But it is an accurate sentiment? In *Patrons Despite Themselves: Taxpayers and Arts Policy,* a Twentieth Century Fund study published in 1983, authors Alan L. Feld, Michael O'Hare, and J.M.D. Schuster conclude that in respect to arts institutions, giving reinforces elitism rather than democracy. They employ a labyrinth of charts and diagrams to support their claim that cultural institutions depend more on the well-to-do than any other charity except education. (By contrast, religious charities are supported primarily by low income groups.) High income households also account for 76 percent of the money donated to arts institutions. This power is reflected on the boards of these organizations, whose members are overwhelmingly white, male, Protestant, and rich.

The report goes on to insist that all this money represents not only private money, but indirectly, public money as well. This indirect public subsidy, the study argues, is revenue the government does *not* collect on dollars donated to charity. Thus, the authors conclude, the rich exercise disproportionate discretion over where and how "public money" for the arts is spent. And how is it spent? Not on media projects, as any producer who has turned to private foundations can tell you. Instead, most big gifts find expression in real estate: hospital pavilions, new buildings on campus, museum wings (or even whole museums: witness the Getty Museum in Southern California).

Don't expect the argument in *Patrons Despite*

Themselves to figure much in the current debate over charitable deductions. The book's recommendation that deduction rules be changed to give public arts agencies more say over these indirect subsidies was probably beyond the bounds of political reality when it was written; it certainly is now. At the moment, arts groups and other non-profits have their hands full simply forestalling the further impoverishment of the non-profit sector. Those white, male, well-do-do board members who oversee arts institutions want the deductions preserved. That's politics in the age of Reagan. —*Debra Goldman*

MINNEAPOLIS' INDEPENDENT CABLE HOOK-UP

The average television professional, if offered $46,000 to put together 27 hours of progamming each week for 12 months, would treat the prospect as a joke. But the Minneapolis media center UCVideo is doing just that: filling prime time and Saturday morning hours on public access Channel 12 of the city's Rogers Cablesystem franchise. Contracted by the Minneapolis Telecommunications Network, the city council-appointed body that oversees access activities in the partially-built, year-and-a-half-old system, UCV has been acquiring programming and sending it down the wire to Rogers's 35,000 subscribers since last September.

Tom Borrup, UCV's executive director, credits the center's prominent role in cable to the "solid profile" the organization maintained during the franchising process. "I was down at city hall more hours than I like to remember," he said. UCV's efforts were a major force behind the creation of MTN, and when the cable company first offered money to MTN, Borrup conjectured that "they felt they owed us something." And once the city-run corporation decided not to let the public access channel lie fallow while waiting for access studios to be built, it also needed the resources of the media center. "MTN is already a year old, and they still have only one administrative staff person. It would have taken them forever to gear up for a project like this. We did it in two months," said Borrup.

Although UCV is committed to providing programming that serves all sectors of the community, the channel is not a "classic" public access outlet operating on a first-come, first-served basis. "I very much decide what to put on and what not," explained Neil Seiling, who heads UCV's exhibition programming. "I've refused half the stuff I've seen. The point is to get people used to tuning in to the channel." For that, the public access station is in the right spot: cable subscribers inevitably come across it as they flip through the VHF part of the dial sampling broadcast fare.

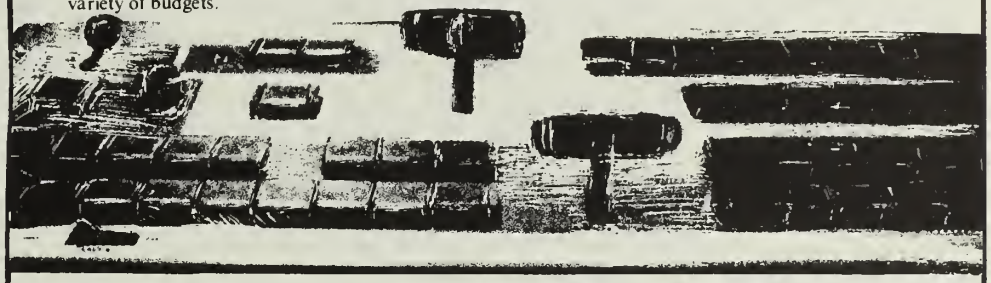
A bit more than half of Channel 12's pro-

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gramming is locally produced. In the early months, the center relied on material from its own archive, which is stocked with black-and-white tapes produced at the University of Minnesota from 1974–77. Local artists who screen their work on-site at UCV now appear on cable as well, and established producers from the older suburban cable systems are additional reliable program suppliers. *Twin Cities Kids Pro-Wrestling* is one of Seiling's favorites among locally produced shows. An unwitting homage to Roland Barthes, the show, according to Seiling, is a "neat kind of deconstruction of professional wrestling. It's amazing: the kids know how wrestlers take punches and how they beat each other up without getting hurt."

The remaining air time is filled with work produced outside the city. Last fall, *Shared Realities,* the Long Beach Museum video art series, had its midwestern cable debut on the channel. Thus far, however, two acquired public access series—*Paper Tiger* from New York and *Alternative Views* from Austin, Texas—have aroused the most comment. After the cablecast of *Paper Tiger* segment "Joan Braderman Reads the *National Enquirer,*" one irate viewer dashed off an indignant letter to MTN, complaining he had counted "41 f-words" in the show. While this raised a few eyebrows at the politically sensitive city-run corporation, Seiling is not immediately apprehensive about censorship pressures. Most of the mail UCV and MTN receive is appreciative and positive, and its volume is increasing.

Of the $46,000 in the budget, $10,000–$15,000 is devoted to acquisition. Payments for programming average a very round—and low—one dollar per minute. "I feel sort of apologetic about how little we pay for tapes," said Seiling. "But a lot of these producers say no one else pays anything for them." A large portion of MTN-supplied funds covers packaging costs (basic editing, dubbing, labeling, and delivery), and Seiling tries to compensate by sharing a little of that wealth with producers. "For example, we have a film chain. If someone sends me something that I can use, I can give them a tape transfer as part of the deal."

Although assignment of the channel to UCV's management was originally intended as a temporary measure, chances are good that the arrangement will be renewed, although perhaps on different terms. Bottom-line blues at Rogers's Toronto-based headquarters have diminished its formerly staunch commitment to access and local origination [see *The Independent,* October 1984]. In the Twin Cities suburbs, where Rogers owns contiguous systems, several access studios are shutting down, and there are rumblings that the operator wants to trim its access commitment within Minneapolis as well. "MTN received $800,000 in 1985," said Borrup, "which is not much, considering they are responsible for public access, government access, educational access, everything. Next year I believe the company wants to cut that to $500,000." Instead of creating five access studios in various city neighborhoods as promised in the franchise agreement, Rogers reportedly now wants to build one, large, centralized center. The diminished availability of production resources may slow Channel 12's transformation into "true" public access. "It's not easy being caught between the city's bureaucracy and the company's bureaucracy," Borrup admitted. "I do hope the contract will be renewed, but we would not handle the same amount of programming for the same amount of money." Along with reducing hours, both Borrup and Seiling would like to narrow their focus, concentrating more on arts programming and work by local independents.

To Borrup, the past seven months prove this kind of three-way "partnership" between cable company, city, and non-profit media center, however precarious, can be "an incredibly cost-effective way for cable companies to program their channels. I would encourage the creation of similar arrangements with universities, public schools, hospitals, all kinds of institutions." Too bad this cost efficiency is in part bought with the money producers are not earning for their work. And too bad so few cable companies are willing to make even this small investment in the communities they serve. —*DG*

LIBRARIES IN THE VIDEO AGE

As independent producers and their distributors know, the halcyon days of the educational market are over. The market grew fat on a substantial diet of federal funds in the late fifties and early sixties, but the withdrawal of such support in the last decade has shrunk the budgets of buyers and wreaked financial havoc among their suppliers. Recently, however, one segment of this market, public libraries, has been making a comeback, thanks to home video.

"Home video is the fastest-growing new program that exists in public libraries today," declared Shirley Mills-Fischer, executive director of the Public Library Association, a division of the American Library Association. "Home video is a relatively inexpensive program to get into and to manage. The purchase and care of films can be relatively expensive and only the larger libraries can afford it. But almost any library can cope with cassettes." And the small investment home cassette collections require will keep paying off: the videocassette market is expanding at rates of which most MBAs only dream. Finally, because a growing number of libraries charge "handling fees" for cassette borrowing, such programs pay for themselves, at the very least. A few libraries, Mills-Fischer reported, are even getting into the business of purchasing VCRs for loan.

What kind of films will your library card get you? Thus far, libraries offer the same Hollywood features that you can rent from the aver-

age video store. It is precisely the lure of "the movies" which has generated so much enthusiasm among librarians: movies on cassette bring people into libraries. Michael Miller, former head of media services for New York State's Mid-Hudson Library system, said, "We found that the people who came in to borrow cassettes were people who never came to the library before."

This stream of new users shows up in increased year-end circulation figures—important when it's time to vote on the municipal budget. "Say there's some sleepy library in a community in which 20 percent of the people have library cards," Miller explained. "That's not very much. If you can boost that figure to 40 percent or 50 percent, there is justification for greater fiscal support. Home video is an easy area in which to build happy taxpayers."

"Circulation is like productivity," observed Marie Nesthus, principal video librarian at the Donnell Public Library in New York City. Nesthus's own policy is to *not* bring Hollywood films into the Donnell collection, "even though I know we could quintuple our circulation if we did." She readily admitted, however, that the Donnell, located in the heart of Manhattan, is privileged. The city hosts a sufficiently large "sophisticated audience" to ensure "a small but steady circulation" for independent works. And because New York City is a major production center, Donnell media staff can stay in touch with the still relatively esoteric world of independent video; according to Nesthus, a number of tapes in the Donnell collection were acquired directly from the artists themselves. By contrast, Miller noted that in many small towns, librarians only "know as much as anyone else who walks though the [video store] door," and, initially at least, purchase the same familiar features that attract the typical consumer.

"Circulation is only one measure of output," said Mills-Fischer, "and it should be seen as one of many factors. Nevertheless, it is a psychological, political tool, and it is a powerful one." But the question remains: is it appropriate for libraries to serve as publicly supported video stores? (Lending out cassettes represents a much more direct competition to video retailers, who depend on rentals for income, than book lending does to bookstores.) "Are you going to serve the wants, needs, and demands of the community that supports you?" Mills-Fischer asked rhetorically. "Or are you going to have a collection of materials that the librarian has decided are in the interests of the community?" Most of the new home video programs are obviously guided by the former, consumer-demand approach.

What do film and videomakers who sell and rent 16mm prints and ¾" cassettes—at much higher prices than mass-produced cassettes—have to hope or fear from the growing presence of home video in the libraries? Are cassette acquisitions stealing dollars from films that serve the "traditional" educational market, as represented by

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the Educational Film Library Association's annual film festival? Not really, asserts Miller, who serves on EFLA's board. For the library buyers who come to EFLA's event represent larger urban libraries and regional centers, which purchase media for use by smaller libraries with limited audiovisual budgets. Home video is having its biggest impact on smaller, local libraries that do not have the money for film collections, lack sizable screening facilities or large screens, and have not been heavy users of visual media in the past.

By encouraging the broader use of visual media in the libraries, Miller believes that home video will be a boon to independents. If, through ½" cassettes, "independents can get into the same distribution stream as Hollywood, they will be seen by people who've never known about them before." His experience in the Mid-Hudson system bore this out. "Initially, the independent works in our collection sat there on a shelf. But after a year or so, they began to circulate." Miller conjectured, "The viewing patterns of VCR buyers were voracious. They'd keep coming back for more and more tapes. It seemed that once people ran out of well-known features, they started to experiment." Perhaps the greater casualness of at-home cassette viewing encourages a little risk-taking, particularly in users who, for whatever reason, prefer to get their cassettes from the local library rather than the local video store.

Marilyn Levin, EFLA's executive director, agreed that "documentary filmmakers shouldn't feel any more threatened by Hollywood now than before. There are still reasons why librarians are interested in documentary and instructional films. If an organization like the League of Women Voters comes looking for a film, they don't want to see *Animal House*. It's not an either/or situation." Like Miller, Levin thinks that home video offers the "potential for a lot more films to reach a much wider audience."

Home video is without doubt changing the educational market, whether through schools illegally taping films from cable television or libraries renting out videocassettes. There are few sectors of the educational market which are so financially secure that the relative inexpensiveness of home video has no allure. The question is whether, by attracting VCR freaks sated with Hollywood fare, independents can ride the coattails of mass entertainment. *—DG*

MASS. PRODUCED MEDIA

The Massachusetts Council on the Arts is initiating Mass Productions, a pilot program to provide new funding for media artists, according to Susan Harnett, director of the contemporary arts department. Mass Productions will provide up to $30,000 in completion funds for film, video, radio and photography projects initiated by resident Massachusetts artists. Like many other state agencies, the Massachusetts Council cannot grant money directly to individuals, but artists can apply through tax-exempt organizations. Previously, the council channeled money through the Artists Foundation, which provided fellowships of $2,000–$3,000, reports Harnett.

Media artists formed an *ad hoc* coalition and lobbied hard for the inclusion of media arts as a production funding category. Although the coalition asked for grants for new works, the council will only support works in progress through the program. Its already-established New Works program has met with grumbling from artists in all disciplines because it funds artists from throughout the world, with decisions made by panels of out-of-state residents. Many artists felt that state money should go to state artists, particularly in light of the shortage of arts dollars. Mass Productions will fund only Massachusetts artists. Says coalition member Midge MacKenzie, "We're pleased this funding is in place, and our concern is to show this time around that there are a sufficient number of quality artists in the state to warrant ongoing production funds." *—Renee Tajima*

LETTERS

IMPERFECT ACCESS

To the editor:

I would like to respond to Kathleen Hulser's article "Toward an Imperfect Video" [January/February 1985]. I have been working in public access cable television a little over a year now, and have five years of broadcast television experience. When I look at typical broadcast television costs of $500 to $1,000 a minute for local production, versus our one dollar per minute, I worry about our survival as community television. Our public access channel, Access Columbus, has just expanded from a half-week to a full 24-hour-a-day channel. We accept programming in five categories:arts/entertainment, news/public affairs, social service, religion, and sports/health/fitness. Like most public access channels around the country, our religion category is constantly full (20 percent of total channel time). What amazes me most is the difficulty we have in filling the arts/entertainment category. We cannot afford to rent programming, yet the community wants and needs to see what "alternative television" really can be. We are currently examining the Public Broadcasting System rules regarding the underwriting or sponsoring of programs, which we hope will enable producers to offset production costs on this noncommercial channel.


FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT



The National Alliance of Media Arts Centers and other groups manage to get press coverage about "media centers" where artists or documentarians can exhibit their work. Meanwhile, here we sit waiting, the best "media center" available. One hundred sixty-five thousand homes are wired for cable in Columbus; where are the independent video producers?

—Michael Langthorne
Assistant Director, Access Columbus
Columbus, OH

JUSTICE FOR ALL

To the editor:

"The government is now telling people . . . that it is all right to go out and shoot black people." These were the impassioned words of the mother of the 19-year-old victim of Bernhard Goetz's gun.

On January 25th, one month after Bernhard Goetz shot four unarmed black teenagers, a New York grand jury exonerated him of any capital offense. The grand jury claims that Goetz acted in self-defense, even though the Manhattan district attorney asserts that "there is no evidence against" the four young men whom Goetz shot.

As members of the media, what we find really shocking about the Goetz case is the media's exploitation of New Yorkers' fear of crime, caused by a deteriorating standard of living, to turn Goetz into a hero and practically announce open season on black youth. Even before the grand jury met, the media, with the *New York Post* leading the way, had passed its judgment and promoted a man with a history of violence and bigotry into a symbol of the "answer to our prayers" for a safe New York.

The people of New York have begun to feel the effects of robbing our social and human services to feed a bloated military budget. But the present media campaign has only served to justify people turning their anger and frustration on each other instead of their conditions.

The road to a better, safer life does not lie in shooting down unarmed teenagers on the subway. We feel the media, and the independent community in particular, should be examining the ways in which our schools, hospitals, mass transit systems, and neighborhoods have been raped to build more B-1 bombers and Trident submarines, not to mention "Star Wars" weapons. These are the real crimes of our society.

—Pam Yates, Tom Sigel
Skylight Pictures
New York, NY

—Pearl Bowser, Ada Griffin, Chris Choy, Allan Siegel, J.T. Takagi
Third World Newsreel
New York, NY

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REELPOLITIK: PROMOTING ALTERNATIVES CONFERENCE

Renee Tajima

The rightward trend of the seventies and eighties may have sparked as much cultural activist initiative as it squelched, as evidenced at the recent conference, Promoting Alternatives: Grassroots Media and Social Change, sponsored by the Media Network and the Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives last January. Despite the winter chill, over 100 people from throughout the eastern U.S. attended the three-day session at New York University.

Media activists have become established and pragmatic during this period of retrenchment. Many participants at the conference came from now-veteran social media organizations or from within institutions they have "infiltrated" —including public libraries, major universities, museums, government agencies, foundations, cable companies, and of course, unions large and small.

The conference itself was well-organized (the sponsors wisely hired two community organizers, Karen Zelermeyer and Marcy May, to coordinate the meeting). It consisted largely of workshops and screenings, highlighted by a showing of *The Times of Harvey Milk,* a film which may symbolize what, ideally, social change media should be: good politics, good quality, good reviews—a good organizing tool.

Posturing on "good politics" was noticeably absent from the conference. I sensed a "let a hundred flowers bloom" attitude among the participants. Folks were more interested in how to get the message out, which in itself may be a statement of pragmatic politics. Personally, I've never seen so many divergent elements of the left get along so well.

Some broad theoretical parameters were offered by keynote speakers Gil Noble and Julia Reichert. Noble, a newscaster at WABC-New York and producer of the public affairs program *Like It Is,* spoke pointedly to the absence of Black perspectives in the U.S. information hierarchy. He defined the contradictions of control as racial, with the media squarely in the hands of a homogeneous group of white, middle-class players: "And so freedom fighters are described as terrorists and terrorists described as freedom fighters." Noble cited the struggle for civil rights as the key to Black participation in the media, including his own hiring at WABC in the sixties. He also urged the mostly white audience at the conference to take a bit of affirmative action themselves—by presenting white America with an alternative perspective and involving more Black filmmakers in their cause. Reichert, a founder of the New Day distribution collective and co-director of *Seeing Red,* defined media power as a question of class, with corporate America pulling the strings. In this scheme, media activists are a "counter-hegemonic force, nipping away and even blasting away at that control." She offered coverage of Central America as one contemporary example of media activists' role "on the frontline of the battle for ideas."

The conference included several generations of media activists, which underscored the persistence of certain social problems that have spanned generations. Filmmaker Leo Seltzer, a veteran of many political struggles, screened clips from his remarkable Depression-era Film and Photo League newsreels (currently housed at the Museum of Modern Art). These films remain powerful documents of social agitation: the war veterans' Bonus March, pickets for the Scottsboro Boys, labor organizing. The Film and Photo League provided visual evidence to counter the claim that "normalcy was just around the corner." Seltzer remembered, "Back then farmers thought city people had all the money and city people thought farmers had all the food. This was the first time farmers really saw that the Depression hit everyone."

While the Film and Photo League was making openly agitational newsreels, Black independents were producing films with social themes within the Hollywood genre. According to Third World Newsreel programmer Pearl Bowser, "In a segregated society these films were directed at a Black audience. Given the captive audience that was looking for entertainment, they also attempted to deal with issues in the community." Significantly, the same message was repeated throughout the conference in a contemporary context: expropriate the form and "look" of the mainstream to reach broad audiences with your message. Gone is the Gang-of-Four-aesthetic —today slick is (or can be) correct. "We've passed the time when the messages are so important that the technical quality doesn't matter," said Elizabeth Perez-Luna, an independent radio producer from Philadelphia. In a panel on broadcast media, Perez-Luna played a sample of high-quality tapes made by Third World independents, ranging from oral histories conducted by Puerto Rican high school students to a documentary on the tenth anniversary of Chilean dictator Augosto Pinochet's regime.

Perhaps the most graphic examples of using mainstream disguises to convey alternative social messages are in union-produced broadcast media, described by Chris Bedford of the Organizing Media Project, Mel Stack of the United Food and Commercial Workers International and Cathy Garmezy of the Labor Institute for Public Affairs. Unions were perhaps the only groups able to afford high production values among those represented at the conference, and they are competing directly against corporate messages. When the Organizing Media Project and the UFCW collaborated to produce *Organizing: The Road to Dignity*, directed primarily at high school audiences, they used athletes from the National Football Players Association as spokesmen. When LIPA, the AFL-CIO's television production unit, produced 30-second spots for broadcast television that promoted unions, they called the project "Campaign for America's Future," complete with a "flagwaving" tone and a competitive look. LIPA also replicated mainstream strategies in promotion and distribution—contracting professional media buyers to negotiate for time on prime sports, news, and entertainment shows.

Among the most interesting organizing models presented was the Washington, D.C.-based Public Interest Video Network. Its New Voices project works with non-profits to get messages on the air. The emphasis here is on *control* over the material that the press will use, as opposed to more passive publicity vehicles like press releases. Arlen Slobodow of PIVN described three basic strategies. First, 30-second public service announcements are distributed on ¾″ cassettes. For instance, PIVN and the Center on the Consequences of Nuclear War produced one spot on nuclear winter that was promoted to public service directors as "useful information for your community." Over 100 stations requested the spot, and a two-week run on Cable News Network generated 2,000 requests for more information. PIVN's second strategy is the production of video background about a particular organization for use in press conferences, a visual hook for the press that "helps you control how your organization is presented," Slobodow said. PIVN provided a six-minute tape on nuclear war, narrated by Carl Sagan, that was picked up by all the networks and used in its entirety by ABC's *Nightline.*

Third, PIVN and LIPA are using new technologies. Both groups have organized teleconferences that involve local chapters in nationwide media events that can be picked up by telecasters or watched in groups on closed-circuit television. For one teleconference organized by the Union of Concerned Scientists, PIVN leased time on two satellites to reach cable and public television stations.

Nonbroadcast programmers have also used high profile media to build social issue audiences. In a panel on audience development,



Courtesy Filmmaker

"Fall of the I Hotel," shot by nine filmmakers over a decade, was shown at the Promoting Alternatives Conference as an example of media used for tenant organizing.

Charlotte Sky of the New Community Cinema in Huntington, New York, addressed the problem of building a suburban audience for social issue films. Over the years, NCC has persistently cultivated the Huntington audience, "showing films that were entertainment and had social themes," said Sky. NCC has since evolved from weekend showings in a dance studio to a theater with an ongoing schedule and 4,000 subscribers. Dik Cool, of the Syracuse Cultural Workers Project, also combines an art house repertoire with independent features, classics, enlightened commercial films, and foreign imports. The group then promotes these films, such as Milos Forman's *Ragtime,* as social issue programs.

But the meat and potatoes of social change media remains documentary shorts, such as Debra Chasnoff and Kim Klausner's *Choosing Children,* a film about lesbian mothers, or Curtis Choy's *Fall of the I Hotel,* a documentary on the struggle to save an SRO hotel in San Francisco. These films require innovative exhibition concepts directed at target audiences. Public relations guru Peter Sandman noted that one series marketed itself as "the only films in town with childcare." And Warrington Hudlin said the Black Filmmaker Foundation filled the gap in independent outlets by going to churches, karate schools, community centers, hospitals, discos, and vacant lots in the Black community to present its "Dialogue" series.

Independent producer Tami Gold pointed out that this kind of "narrowcasting" could be an antidote to the pressure for high profile productions. "Perhaps we could have more impact on people's lives if we try to reach more specific groups of people and not reach for the lowest common denominator." She recommends cheap production and distribution. Her video documentary on organizing nurses, *From Bedside to Bargaining Table,* co-produced with Lyn Goldfarb, is sold for $60 and rented for $30 with an option to sell. But the issue of low-cost distribution has, historically, been a bone of contention between producers and activists. At the 1983 Third World Cinema Conference in New York, filmmaker Haile Gerima complained that Third World filmmakers are "literally starving because progressive groups in the United States and Europe show their works for free."

In a panel on "resource sharing," co-moderated by John Demeter of the Star Film Library in Boston, which provides low-cost rentals to community groups, several videomakers advocated a kind of populist distribution based on the home cassette market. For instance, Ian Tierman's anti-nuclear *The Last Epidemic* and Dee Dee Halleck's video on North Americans in Nicaragua, *Waiting for the Invasion,* have been mass-produced for sale and rental at very low cost. Tierman sells his tape for $10 each in quantities of five. Julia Lesage, an editor of *Jump Cut* and an independent producer, will do the same with her series of VHS tapes on Nicaragua. She called the "copyability" of videotape a great advantage for radical organizing—although a number of producers at the conference complained about pirated videotapes.

While new technologies and programming strategies were discussed, the conference's basic concern remained the use of the media in a day-to-day organizing context. A participant from the Hoboken Action for Nuclear Disarmament cautioned against media seduction. The fledgling group had showed *The Atomic Cafe* to raise money to help enact an ordinance that would make the New Jersey town a nuclear-free zone. An astounding 400–500 people showed up. Four months later, the group showed another film; this time, the mayor and city council members showed up and committed themselves to the ordinance. "But the drive started to die because no one really thought of doing sustained organizing." More successful models use media in a systematic way. Cathy Howell of the Carolina Community Project programs films and tapes very specifically to build solidarity, to train organizers, to anchor a meeting when people are insecure about speaking. For example, Howell has used *Rosie the Riveter* successfully in communications training sessions between Black and white women.

The conference demonstrated that, despite the onslaught of eighties conservatism, social change media is certainly not dead—and it may even be thriving. To a large extent, social issue media has become entrenched in our visual dialogue—and some of it is even starting to look mainstream. Meanwhile, media activists are increasingly working within institutions or building organizations of their own. True, the movement has been hard hit by Reaganomics—conference participants like the Star Film Library, Global Village, and Media Network are among the many groups that have experienced severe funding cuts. But the conferees took the long view. Said Leo Seltzer, "The angering thing is that the problems of the eighties are starting to look like the problems of the thirties, like the failure of the federal government to take care of the homeless and unemployed workers." The encouraging thing is that media activists haven't given up the fight.

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FILM-TO-TAPE: CHOOSING A TRANSFER ELEMENT

David Leitner

The late twentieth century's penchant for miniaturizing and personalizing high technology has caught up with the big screen as, increasingly, the *small* screen becomes the centerpiece of the "information age," with almost every video, computer, and telecommunications device featuring one. So powerful is the role of the small screen in our society that *no* filmmaker can choose to ignore it. All roads now lead to video distribution. Accordingly, in the interests of image fidelity, the modern filmmaker ought to look beyond the basic requirements of the automated magic lantern show that is theatrical distribution and give special consideration to the unique requirements of the film-to-tape process itself.

This column has previously discussed the merits of film-to-tape ["Film-to-Tape: Background to a Choice," April 1982] and detailed the assortment of film-chains and telecines in use ["Film-to-Tape: The Transfer Process," May 1982]. Having reached the decision to transfer film-to-tape, however, the filmmaker faces yet another vexing choice: which element to transfer?

Today's 16mm filmmaker typically shoots color negative, edits the workprint, conforms the original negative for A&B printing, and orders an answer print from the lab. In addition, if a film's release is imminent, the filmmaker orders a duplicate of the original negative—a reversal "C.R.I." or a "dupe negative"—that can sustain repeated printing. A film-to-tape session held at this point, then, would involve the A&B rolls of original negative, the answer print, or some duplicate of the negative. Or, perhaps at the suggestion of the transfer facility, the filmmaker orders a Kodak 7380 low contrast print. Kodak 7380 is a modified print stock intended to enhance the shadow detail of the film-to-tape image. Its weakened contrast, however, renders it unsuitable for normal projection and therefore useless outside of the transfer session, so the filmmaker must be prepared to budget it as a separate item apart from the standard answer print.

In light of the added expense, is a low contrast 7380 transfer really that much better than a conventional answer print transfer? It all depends. As we shall see, the transfer "look" of each film element derives from that element's basic sensitometry—that is, how it photographically fixes shadow details, midtones, and highlights, as expressed by its "characteristic curve."

Figure 1—don't be put off, it's not all that complicated—demonstrates a handful of simple truths that dictate the outcome of a transfer from a 7291 color negative, 7384 answer print, or 7380 low contrast print. (For simplicity, only the characteristic curve of the all-important green-sensitive layer of each element is represented in these examples.) In the graph at the left of Figure 1, the characteristic curve of the original 7291 is plotted. Along the bottom axis I've arranged a gray scale that represents the eight f-stops of exposure in the real world. The dark tones indicate shadows and the light tones, highlights. In other words, our subject reflects eight increments of luminance, an f-stop each as read by a spotmeter.

The actual foot-lambert levels don't matter in this example; what is significant is that a latitude of eight f-stops, or a contrast ratio of 256:1, fits handily on the "straight line portion" of the sensitometric curve. That's the part of the curve that doesn't curve: it's linear, which means that for every equal increase in exposure there's a correspondingly equal increase in density on the developed negative. The equal steps of exposure in this example are reproduced on the negative as equal steps of density, and there's no "tonal scale distortion."

Figure 1 demonstrates this graphically. The vertical axis of the 7291 graph indicates increasing levels of density on the developed negative, and I've arranged its scale to correspond to that of the neutral density filter series familiar to filmmakers (0.3 represents one stop of density; 0.6, two stops; 0.9, three stops; and so on). The increments of exposure along the bottom, though not quantified, are similarly scaled. Compare the length of the real-world gray scale along the bottom of the resultant negative density range, as indicated at the left of the 7291 graph. Although the increments of density on the negative are roughly equal, a sort of overall compression of the tonal scale has taken place. Indeed, a 7291 color negative has a "gamma" or contrast reproduction ratio of .55, represented graphically by the slope of its curve. That is, 7291 within its latitude takes the contrast of the real world and shrinks it to 55 percent. That's why a color negative image, aside from its orange cast, looks flattened.

It follows that the print stock would have a high contrast reproduction ratio, in excess of 1:1, so as to restore the flat negative image to its original real-world contrast of 1. A little figuring suggests a print stock gamma of 1.8 (neg. gamma .55 × print gamma 1.8 = 1). But here we're in the murky world of psychophysics, where gazing at a bright screen in dark surroundings seems to lighten screen contrast and desaturate colors, at least as far as the visual cortex is concerned. We're in an imperfect world of commercial projection, where projector lens flare, ghosting from poor pulldown-sprocket/shutter synchronization, and sundry sources of spurious ambient light actively attenuate measurable screen contrast. And we're in a world of subjective impressions, where the end result of shooting and printing and projecting has to "look natural," regardless of photometric readings or predictions of vision theory. As it happens, the contrast reproduction ratio of 7384 is close to 4:1, meaning that the contrast of the print image prior to projection is roughly twice that of the original scene! (Neg. gamma .55 × approx. print gamma 3.8 = 2.)

The right half of Figure 1 bears this out. I've taken the densities created on the 7291 negative and "printed" them onto the characteristic curves of both standard 7384 and low contrast 7380. (For the purposes of illustration, the axes of the right-hand graph are reversed. Exposure is now represented on the vertical axis, and resultant densities are on their sides.) Compare the 7384 density range on the top to the low contrast 7380 range on the bottom, then compare both to the original tonal scale at the left. The exposure steps are no longer equivalent. The 7384 pinches the highlights, then stretches the midtones and shadows. The low contrast 7380 also compresses highlights, stretches midtones, then crushes shadow detail.

There is no psychophysical payoff for such tonal scale distortion in the film-to-tape transfer. The flying-spot telecine—at the moment, the telecine most popular with filmmakers—is rather like a high-quality office copier. It faithfully reproduces what is fed into it. When original negative is transferred, a near-linear tonal scale remarkably close to real life is reproduced. The scene as viewed on the small screen looks much the way it did to the eye. Shadows are full of detail; highlights, too. But when a print intended for projection is transferred, the telecine mercilessly reproduces whatever tonal distortion is manifest. As a result, 7384 shadows are bottomless, highlights are anemic.

What's more, the flying-spot telecine has its limits. According to Rank Cintel, the English manufacturer (with a little help from the BBC), it will "correctly reproduce pictures from positive or negative. . . within the density range of 0 to 3.5." Now, we one can argue what it means to "correctly reproduce pictures," but taken at face value, it's clear that in the given example of 7384, where the maximum density extends beyond 4.2 (imagine a neutral density filter of 4.2!), the shadow detail isn't going to make it. It's no surprise, therefore, that the modified density range of 7380 falls below 3.5.

As a rule, the flying-spot telecine prefers thinner densities. The light source of a flying-spot telecine is a small cathode ray tube, and its luminous output is relatively modest. When a dark print is transferred, less light passes through the print to the photosensitive elements of the telecine, and consequent signal amplification introduces video noise to the film-originated image. At the same time, the colorist's color correction system is often pushed to its limits, restrict-

ing the available range of correction.

If a film features high contrast lighting or a predominance of dark, shadowy figures, Figure I indicates the use of 7380 as a print for transfer. If, instead, flat lighting is the rule, the choice of 7380 versus 7384 is less critical. The reproduction of highlights and midtones, as Figure 1 predicts, is somewhat similar. Therefore, whether a 7380 transfer is that much better depends. . . on the subject matter.

With this mind, take another look at 7291. Its maximum density in this example is about 1.9. Again, there are no pinched highlights, no out-of-telecine-range shadow details. Now examine Figure 2. This time, I've "printed" the 7291 density range onto the 45-degree characteristic curve of 7243, which is used to make the "master positive" from which a duplicate negative, also on 7243, is struck. 7243 has a contrast reproduction ratio of 1:1. It simply reverses from negative to positive the tonalities printed onto it, adding no distortion in the process. The resulting tonal scale is a direct reflection of the 7291 density range, which itself represents the contrast of the real-world scene reduced to 55 percent .

Compare the 7243 master positive density range to that of low contrast 7380. Which element provides lighter densities for the flying-spot telecine while at the same time evenly reproducing the full negative tonal scale?

Truth be told, 7380 is a compromised product. Neither fish nor fowl, it is less than ideal for either transfer or, with its milky shadows, projection. Kodak evidently felt that a specialized film-to-tape product that could not be projected to examine answer print timing would not be saleable. They may well be right: filmmakers who wouldn't dream of screening an intermediate "pre-print" element like the master positive or dupe negative insist on a second or third corrected 7380 low contrast print—as if no color correction were available at the telecine! But, ironically, although 7380 is intended for standard answer print timing, many filmmakers are discovering that by cutting the answer print timing by at least six points and thereby creating a lighter 7380 print that is even less acceptable in projection, a better transfer is obtained. In Figure 1, this would represent shifting each of the 7380 densities one step to the left, bringing the print image further into the flying-spot's preferred range at the expense of compressing another highlight tone. This technique has been favored in Europe, particularly Germany, for quite some time.

Why is it necessary to transfer a print at all? Why not always use a master positive or C.R.I., or even the A&B rolls of original negative? Tune in to Part II for the answers—and some more questions, as well.

David Leitner is an independent producer who works at DuArt Film Labs in New York.

Figure 1.
COLOR NEGATIVE TO PRINT

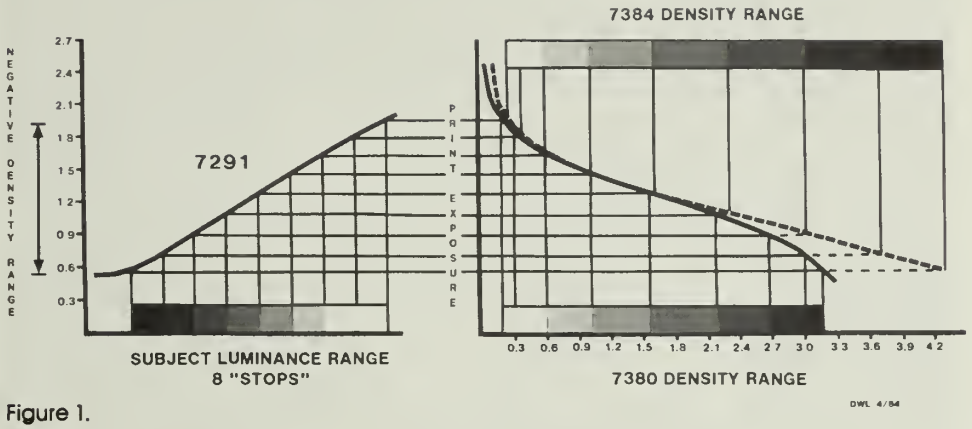


Figure 1.

Figure 2.
COLOR NEGATIVE TO
7243 MASTER POSITIVE

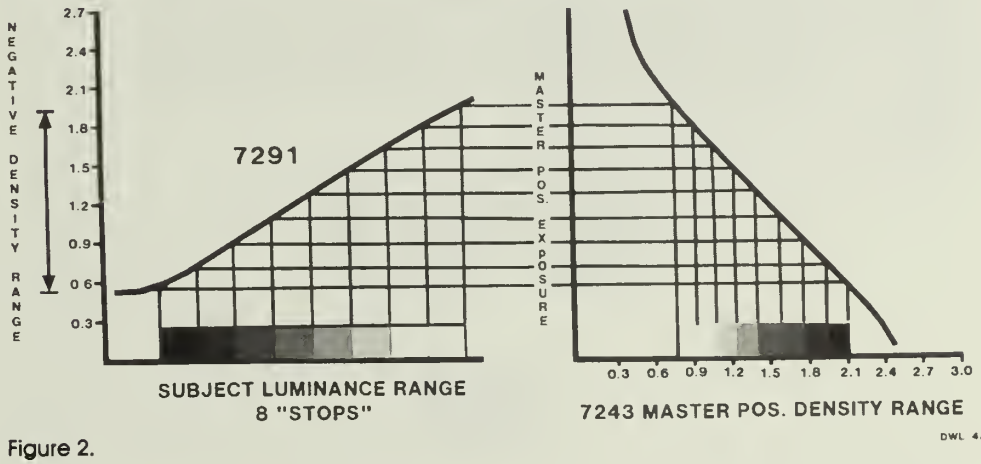


Figure 2.

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SPECULATIONS



Courtesy Video Data Bank

Barbara Latham and Christine Tamblyn's "Chained Reactions" is mysterious, physically intimate, and gently evocative.

NARRATIVE VIDEO BY WOMEN

Helen DeMichiel

Sexuality and violence, romantic yearnings for honest intimacy, the myths of motherhood, and the dichotomy between private and public life are some of the challenging themes recently explored and articulated by women video artists. Alongside the work of feminist filmmakers who have made considerable headway with mixtures of theories and formal invention lie the less prominent but equally important recent experiments in narrative video by women. Like their filmmaking counterparts, these videomakers work in a milieu influenced and sustained by current political and cultural feminist thought, which has significantly criticized and redefined notions of how stories can and might be told, and for what audience. From mythologies and stereotypes to economic and social relationships, these artists question and reconstruct the content and perception of female experience. Although still marginalized as avant-garde video, this work is rooted in familiar subject matter, yet resonates with fascinating variety, surprises and contradictions.

Fueled by video's lack of historical identity and burden, these artists serendipitously draw from and remodel a number of antithetical traditions, including avant-garde films, confessional melodrama and popular romance literature, soap operas and commercials, serial dramas, educational broadcasts, and comedy sitcoms. They also freely borrow and ironically rewrite the gimmicks and codes of television. These sources, though, are not merely parodied for effect but manipulated and placed in a highly altered narrative context. By embracing and playing with cinematic, literary, and television genres, these videotapes tend to elude easy categorization. Through this eclectic synthesis of material, these artists are able to relate stories from women's psychological and social experience that we probably won't ever see on TV.

All of the works I've chosen to discuss—*Chained Reactions,* by Barbara Latham and Christine Tamblyn; *Beneath the Skin* and *Possibly in Michigan*, by Cecelia Condit; *Impossible Love,* by Candace Reckinger; and *Womb with a View,* by Sherry Millner—can be considered examples of such narratives. Although vastly different in style, each artist tries to excavate the nebulous area between seductive fictional stereotypes and daily realities, hard social facts and utopian yearnings for a better world yet to be conceived. When secrets, dreams, and fantasies are described and interwoven with the dramas of daily life, they become collectively confirmed and open for scrutiny. These artists deliberately show experience not as a linear totality, but as a fragmentary edifice—ambiguous, contradictory, and changing.

Each tape reckons with the idea of a story to be told, yet the narrative exists between the lines,

functioning like a puzzle or rebus. Requiring the active intervention of the audience to put the pieces together, these tapes do not exert control over a viewer's experience, but rather present a series of narrative elements to be reassembled and thought about in a number of ways. These videotapes differ from films in that they are more about speculation than spectacle.

Because video as a form is not "spectacular," it has historically attracted women who want to produce work without the preciousness of film-as-product. As massively complex economic distribution problems encourage filmmakers to take fewer formal risks, video becomes an area where artists can work quicker, looser, and on a smaller budget. When the fundamental intention is to think and feel out loud, and the pressure to produce a critically acclaimed masterpiece is eliminated, this liberating if somewhat limiting choice defines the working situation. Video, as these women practice it, still represents a form that has not been overwhelmed by the often mystified and drawn-out trappings of the production process. Video's casual living room intimacy encourages speculation, provoking thought and interest long after viewing. A loose-limbed expression of intelligence, wit, and craft informs these tapes, as they mercifully rely more on imaginative reinvention than sexy techno-glitz. Without the debatable polemics surrounding the larger-than-life cinematic representation of women, these tapes point to a fictional video (structures that are fragmentary, open-ended, and ellipitical) which may be more conducive than film to opposing and overcoming traditions of "polished product."

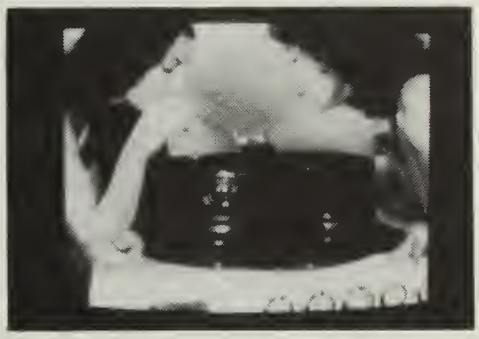
Of this selection, Barbara Latham and Christine Tamblyn's *Chained Reactions* is the most mysterious, physically intimate, and gently evocative. The tape is an energetic patchwork of domestic and overcharged black-and-white images and sounds concocted as if from a free-associating dreamkit of a homebound Sunday afternoon. Sequences quickly oscillate between reenacted scenes from gothic novels and TV soaps like *Dark Shadows* and loosely shot diaristic images of ordinary life—cooking and other mundane tasks, friends casually relaxing, close-up domestic gestures captured in passing. Shots of hands laying out tarot cards, exotic birds, and personally significant objects are intercut, while a soundtrack of exaggerated ordinary household sounds, heartbeats, and snippets of familiar movie music provides an undercurrent of suspense. Latham and Tamblyn take the elements of a supernatural narrative plot, complete with meaningfully packed gestures, glances and moments, only to strip down and recontextualize them—maybe as riddles to be solved, maybe not. Intertitles appear and disappear—"She was afraid to open the door," "She feared for her sanity"—teasing our need to find plot where one refuses to cohere.

Although an alluringly and seemingly random montage that powerfully builds by allusion and inference, the videotape is at once analytical—its inherent structure questions a whole set of arcane symbols—and poetically ambiguous. It establishes a patterning device which allows the viewer to drift in and out of memories and images, renewing a sense of the magic of daily life. Through a delightfully skillful blend of pictures and sounds, Latham and Tamblyn play with our constant expectations for a conclusion, continuously reshuffling the deck of mediated icons until they make no sense, and then all sense. Images, from commonplace to eccentric, are repeated, electronically processed, and overlaid. Superficially seeming to be a hermetic game of chutes and ladders replete with loaded and empty signs, an intensity of meaning builds, which lends a sense of foreboding, of still unconsummated acts. Yet the playful reworking of gothic mystery in *Chained Reactions* continually brings us back to thoughts about how and why these themes are so successful in popular literature and why women are attracted to these specific forms of entertainment—for release or relief from the mundane?—and what this implies.

While Latham and Tamblyn have abstracted the elements of gothic fantasy, Cecelia Condit's tapes *Beneath the Skin* and *Possibly in Michigan* tell strangely poetic stories where sinister suspense is palpable, and violence, insanity, and death seem justifiable obsessions. In order to articulate the unnamed fears that constitute the mysterious underside of female sexuality, Condit makes the macabre a personal fascination, and works through a whimsical black humor to the anxieties women have about the ever-present proximity of brutal, senseless violence.

In *Beneath the Skin,* a female narrator tells a story about discovering that her boyfriend had murdered his previous girlfriend. Total disbelief propels the narrator's confession forward, even after body parts are found in her closet. Lurid yet dreamlike images catch the drift of the narration—decaying faces, dancing or screaming figures, a stylized and repetitive reenactment of the crime—cross-cut and reprocessed to provide individually seductive but grotesque metaphors for what we hear on the soundtrack. Through her startling mixture of contradictory images that lure as well as repel, Condit contemplates the nature of victimization and the individual's questioning of and revolt against complicity. The potential for female passivity or aggressiveness is constantly played for extreme effect, as beauty encounters the beast, and danger and innocence are posed as wary bedfellows.

In her recent tape, *Possibly in Michigan,* a morbid but funny revenge fantasy is fully and ironically realized. Living in an apparently safe and cozy environment of suburban neighborhoods and shopping malls, two best girlfriends are beset by a most peculiar and disturbing aggravation. A monstrously masked man follows them, threatening to kill and "eat them for



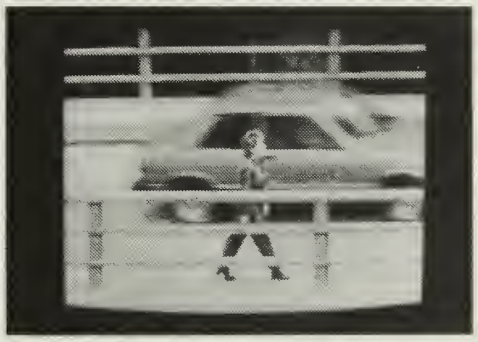
Courtesy Video Data Bank

Cecelia Condit explores violence between the sexes in "Possibly in Michigan," a parody of the "hack 'n slash" horror genre.



Courtesy Video Data Bank

Lurid yet dreamlike images populate a narrative of men, women, and murder in Cecelia Condit's "Beneath the Skin."



Courtesy Video Data Bank

Candace Reckinger's "Impossible Love" is a tale of disintegration set in a fascistic Los Angeles of the future.

Chained Reactions, Beneath the Skin, Possibly in Michigan, and *Impossible Love* are distributed by The Video Data Bank, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Columbus Drive at Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60603. *Womb with a View* is distributed by Sherry Millner, 139 N. Walnut St., Yellow Springs, OH 45387.



Courtesy Videomaker

Sherry Millner examines her pregnancy and motherhood in "Womb with a View."

love." In the short, hyperstylized scenes that take place in department stores and at home, Condit also includes deceptively light-hearted and endearing musical numbers, contradicting the creepy horror of the situation. She cleverly reverses the Freudian notion of the castrating female. Here, the man is the "animal/cannibal" who, in time, is creatively disposed of by friends Sharon and Janice. In the ritualized narrative scenario and its satirical resolution, where the aggressor becomes the victim, Condit unflinchingly visualizes and exorcises fears of sexual violence. In the virtuously safe milieu populated by elegant young women out to buy perfume in the shopping mall, she parodies for superb effect the excesses of the current "hack 'n' slash" horror genre.

Love lies uncomfortably but passionately next to physical and psychic mutilation in Condit's tapes. In Candace Reckinger's *Impossible Love,* emotions become too dangerous in her characters' "harsh and heavy world of political fact." At the beginning, a young female narrator says, "This is a tale about disintegration, when little pieces fall off and shatter into a million fragments." In this bleak post-industrial future, individual imagination and passion have been virtually erased; nothing is or can be as it may seem. The disjunctive science fiction story revolves around personal relationships, political events and frighteningly brutal situations which are implied using a tenuously connected series of narrative tableaux. Reckinger's is a grimly fascistic, yet altogether familiar Los Angeles landscape ("a terrible political world" where "if you were alone you belonged entirely to yourself") of hollow chic, loaded silences, and surveillance-scanned architecture. The mannequin-like characters act out choreographed theatrical moments that intentionally reveal only bits and pieces of a story about terrorism and counter-insurgency. Quasi-debilitated female "urban guerrillas" are stopped by sinister agents, yet they insist on carrying on a form of unsuccessful rebellion anyway, if only through indirect witness—"things happened, and I want to tell you a story, but I can't express it in words." Dreamlike confessions are placed next to unbalanced nightmarish images; an abstract soundtrack and surveillance video add to the sense of being watched, and continuously displaced. Reckinger has imagined a landscape where love and social discourse have become debased but not altogether silenced. Her pessimistic yet elegantly conceived scenario calls into question the language of personal and public politics; the possibility for any kind of communication in a technocratic society can only be tentative. She also seems to be asking whether desire can genuinely exist as a particular female construct or can be confronted in a mediated, information-controlled society, where language serves power.

Less circumspect than Reckinger, Sherry Millner questions a particularly loaded set of language constructs in *Womb with a View.* Using a grab bag of visual and verbal puns, collaged graphics, sardonic gags, and send-ups of advice and self-help programs, she offers an honest and poignant meditation on the trials and joys of her incipient motherhood. Given the transient nature of her culture, Millner realizes she has never learned the psychic or social techniques for being a mother. So she looks for a new set of models and, in doing so, rambunctiously debunks sentimental stereotypes. As a chronicle of a very special journey, she manages to inventively document the interior and exterior process of transformation and takes a step toward personally and socially reframing the terms of motherhood. Through a series of ironically-titled episodic chapters—"Pillar of Saltines," "Esthetics and Domestic Anthropology," "Savage Nomenclature"—Millner and partner Ernest Larsen try to "name the experience"—its fears and doubts, exhilaration and overwhelming happiness.

Millner's diaristic narration alternates between philosophical reflection, extravagant fantasy, and mundane worries. She has nightmares about being split in two (the artist half, the mother half) by an errant buzzsaw, finds herself a hysterical madonna, and sees saltine crackers everywhere. She thinks herself a piece of ripe fruit, and wonders if Ernie would be a better mother than she. As she reexamines her past in the light of pregnancy, she comments on how language has formed her whole notion of what motherhood means. Purposefully low-tech, *Womb with a View* relies on a rich and sophisticated assortment of sources: art history, mass media, literature, and mythology. Drawings and hand-made props, quotes from films, illustrated analogies, and personal anecdotes are vigorously thrown together to simultaneously make the event "real" and confront the current politics of biology .

Above all, these videotapes attempt to speak to common as well as individual experience. As the everyday world is perceived and identified anew, commonplace occurrences are made strange and opened for reinterpretation. These tapes ambitiously raise questions about ways in which women's personal and social lives may be addressed and recreated. The visions encompassed are wide and complex, entertaining and subversive—and the questions posed are large and open for debate. These efforts should not remain ghettoized as eccentric art video; they produce and are produced in an atmosphere inspiring increasing numbers of feminist video artists to chart territory heretofore only dreamed of and tentatively defined.

Helen DeMichiel is a video artist in Boston.

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACTS



Jane Creighton

"SALVADORANS USE VIDEO IN THE PROPAGANDA WAR" rang the headline in the *New York Times* over an August 1984 article that purported to introduce the film collective of the Radio Venceremos System to the *Times*-reading public. In a leap that must have caused some bemusement among the collective, reporter James Brooke likened their work to Ayatollah Khomeini inspiring his followers on audio cassettes. Reading on, we learned that the Salvadoran government was waging a "video counterattack," airing scenes of guerrilla destruction that we were to surmise played well against the "home movie" quality of the guerrilla productions—those amalgams of "propaganda, training clips, and documentary." The implication was, if you've seen one obsessive revolutionary movement, you've seen them all. Or, as my good friend overheard on the street, "Islam! You know, that's the place south of Mexico in the jungle!"

It's easy to jab the *Times* for picking and choosing its version of evenhandedness. The more difficult problem Brooke unintentionally raises for anyone interested in bringing news about revolutionary movements in Central America to the United States is how one develops an audience for clearly partisan information given the barriers of public distrust for, and ignorance of, anyone else's revolution.

I enter this article through the doorway of *Times*-style ideology and practice because the *Times* fairly describes the climate into which the North American portion of the Radio Venceremos project falls. That project means to show us the extent of the war, the extent of current popular resistance in El Salvador, and the extent of U.S. military involvement. Halting U.S. intervention is top priority for the Salvadorans; broad exhibition of these films and tapes could be instrumental toward that end. That depends on the ability of the organized opposition and political media in the U.S. to loosen the grip of the cold war climate and the Monroe Doctrine ideology that have kept us culturally and historically ignorant—isolated by the rhetoric of commie attack and the *Times*'s blithely-defined video counterattack. A look into the history, the films, and the evolving purpose of the film collective of the Radio Venceremos System suggests ways of proceeding that may be of interest to an alternative media in the U.S. in pursuit of its own audience.

The appearance of RVS films in the U.S. over the past few years coincides with the outbreak of civil war in El Salvador in 1980. The civil war has been fueled by a significant increase in military and economic aid to the government by the U.S. So the RVS films address a nation already committed to a side in the conflict. These are war documentaries shot well within the the point of view of the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN). They detail the extent and organization of the opposition, and as such are meant to influence any audience implicated in the war. We are implicated. Therefore, we have the opportunity to watch and act, one way or another, on what we have learned.

To more deeply question the nature of the war is a form of action. The capacity of RVS productions to raise more questions than answers among the viewing audience is a function of their political intent. That function has been tested to some degree among North American church, solidarity, and college and high school organizations, but not much beyond the somewhat limited reach of these groups. Let's discuss the public at large. If you are part of the majority of North Americans who are mostly disinterested in the distinctions between El Salvador and Nicaragua, you may still be intrigued by the appearance of Caspar Weinberger in a combat zone. Your interest may be sparked by a rain of U.S. paratroopers on military exercise dropping into a countryside where you have just seen young left-wing revolutionaries moving with grace and camaraderie through a village market. You may not give a damn about village people, but you will probably for the first time have had a glimpse of Salvadorans directing their gaze at one another, rather than at a U.S. camera crew standing around with interpreters next to an election queue.

If you are a Salavadoran and live in a village outside the guerrilla-controlled zones, you will be aware of the guerrillas because their units may pass through your village two or three times a year. You may be sympathetic to them because of your connection to or awareness of the mass organizations which flowered before the awesome government repression that marked the start of the war. The increased use of mobile video units by RVS will probably make available to you what the lack of newspapers, your probable inability to read, and the conditions of government repression won't. You will see health clinics, schools, an apparently functioning economy, and a coordinated guerrilla army that effectivelly manages to keep government forces out of the liberated zones.

If you are a Salvadoran living in a liberated zone, the domestic and international furor over upcoming elections in the country may have little immediate impact on you, concerned as you might be with the intricacies of self-defense and self-government. Duarte, D'Aubuisson *et al.* won't be fielding campaign promises in your

neighborhood. You might be in danger of supposing that the developing conditions of your immediate society are being played out with the same vigor in the barrios of San Salvador. You will, in the discussion following a display of footage about life in the cities, learn that the largest percentage of the country is still under government control, and that U.S. intervention in all levels of government is prolonging the war indefinitely. You might then judge that you are in for a long haul, and that the high morale with which you are living, based on your successes in the liberated zones, is going to have to last beyond the fleeting exhilaration of intense hope.

Same films, different audiences. And for each audience, different questions of who, what, when, where, why, how? The assumption that the active quest for answers is the best way for people to inform themselves about the state of their world is built into RVS's collective process.

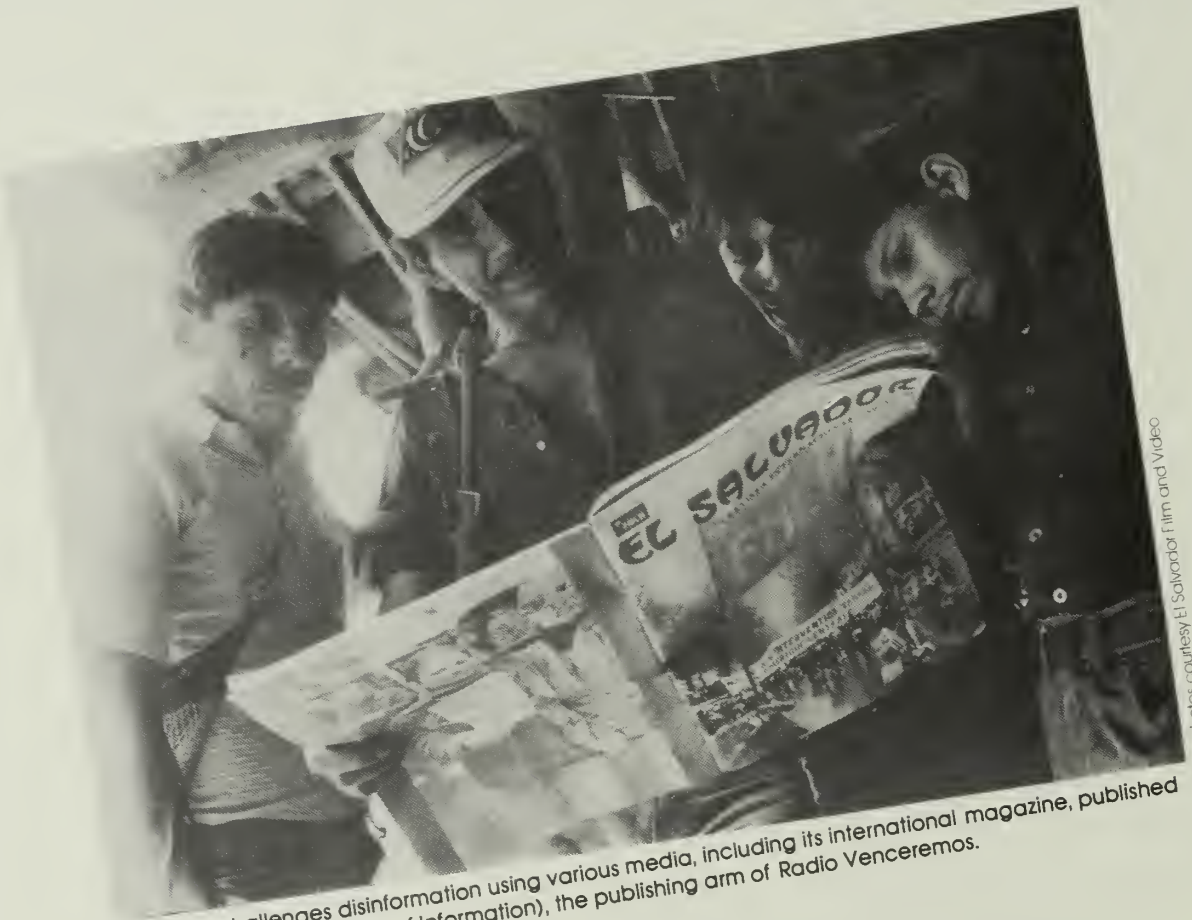
That process evolved under the harsh conditions which circumscribe guerrilla filmmaking during a civil war. In late 1980 and 1981, Radio Venceremos was formed to create a radio communications base in the guerrilla-controlled province of Morazan, in concert with the FLMN's consolidation of its fighting base there. Several independent Salvadoran filmmakers sympathetic to the FMLN went to Morazan under the collective name Cera a la Izquierda (Zero to the Left) to document the new society being created. Only one had formal training in film. The rest were students, largely self-taught, or people from other disciplines—writers, photographers, singers. They went with only the vaguest notion of how to show what they produced—send it to friends in Mexico, perhaps, who had international connections to Europe.

Paolo Martin was working with Radio Venceremos when CI arrived in Morazan. He is an internationalist who had come to El Salvador as a journalist and stayed on, making the crossover to the new information order that Radio Venceremos exemplifies. His discussion of RVS's cinematic origins provides the background for much of this article. *Morazan* and *Decision to Win* are among the first offerings of revolutionary Salvadoran cinema. Both document aspects of life in the controlled zones. Scripted and shot with 16mm film, they are the product of a collaboration between the filmmakers and the various activists working with Radio Venceremos—members of mass organizations and journalists like Martin, or the Venezuelan cameraman who came to make TV features and, likewise, remained.

This group worked on the premise that the world at large, and El Salvador in particular, would benefit from the depiction of the extraordinary way life goes on in the zones amidst an internationally-defined Salvadoran "crisis." *Morazan* is a 15-minute short showing the production of and training in the use of homemade weapons. *Decision To Win* is a feature-length film that unfolds a rural universe of collective sugar-making, corn-farming, health care, education, and self-defense. It is a temperately-paced primer, enlightening to anyone who thinks Salvadorans live only in a nightmare of manipulation by warring sides.

These films set the stylistic course for succeeding productions: minimal voiceover narration and a concentration on faces, what people say to one another, what they say to the camera about the work they do, and the camera's gaze. But the use of 16mm imposed restrictions that threw into question its long-term effectiveness. When they made *Decision to Win,* CI thought they would soon be showing it in the big theaters in San Salvador. Escalating U.S. intervention proved that assumption wrong. This meant several things. Few people in El Salvador could see the films, having no access to electrical generators in the liberated zones and no public access, so to speak, in the cities. CI could and would make use of fledgling international distribution connections to Europe and the U.S., but that could not satisfy the deeper intent that the making of *Decision to Win* uncovered—to provide revelatory images to Salvadorans about themselves and the progress of their revolution.

Producing Salvadoran documentary in a world at the very least acquiescent to the Sal-



All photos courtesy El Salvador Film and Video

The FMLN challenges disinformation using various media, including its international magazine, published by COMIN (Commandoes of Information), the publishing arm of Radio Venceremos.

vadoran and U.S. governments' versions of the red menace meant that the classic documentary format of *Decision to Win* had to be revised for the duration. The method of going into the countryside for anywhere from two weeks to two months, scripting and filming, then leaving the country to edit, produce, and show up at film festivals proved inadequate to the larger goal of building an informational infrastructure within El Salvador that would be consistently responsive to both domestic and international developments. Crucial to this was the recognition that visual reportage needed to be part of, as well as a picture of, the revolutionary process.

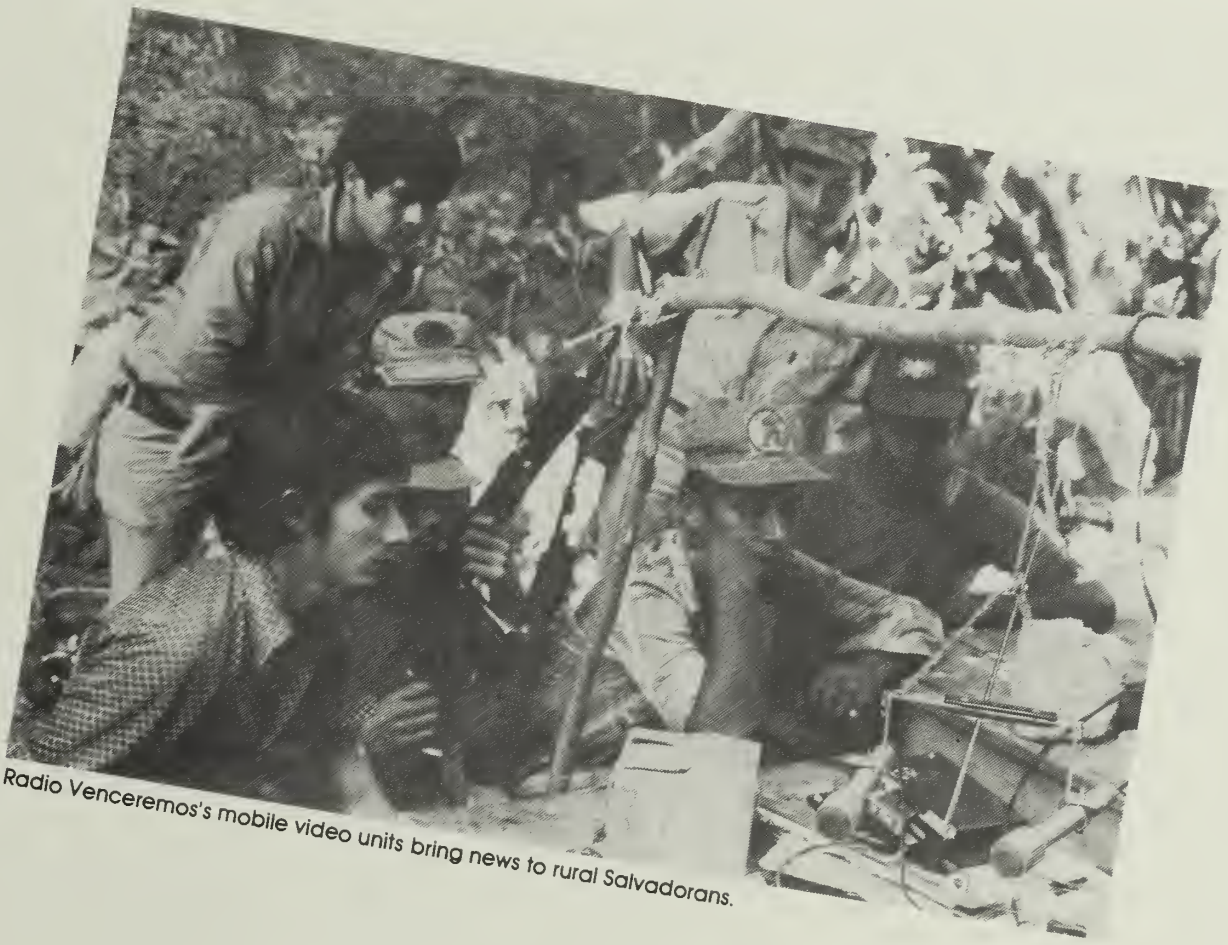
Martin describes discussions within the CI collective, which radiated into all the organizations operating in the liberated zones, about the information projects. The result was the formation in 1982 of a film collective within the Radio Venceremos System—that is, a communcations network bringing the popular use of video and Super-8 into the structure originally built by guerrilla radio. What *Decision To Win* projected—a condition where all aspects of military, economic, and cultural life were integrated into the defense of Morazan province—became the modus operandi for the filmmakers as well.

Central to this was the switchover from 16mm to ½" video. Martin said that 16mm required a predefinition for political reporting: script the film, shoot the film in one period of time, edit the film away from the field, then return some time later for the next round. This was good independent filmmaking, but the filmmakers —and to some extent their films—remained outside the full revolutionary process. In addition, this method could not keep pace with the geometrically expanding story of the war on the domestic and international fronts, nor with the diverse domestic uses to which film and video could be put.

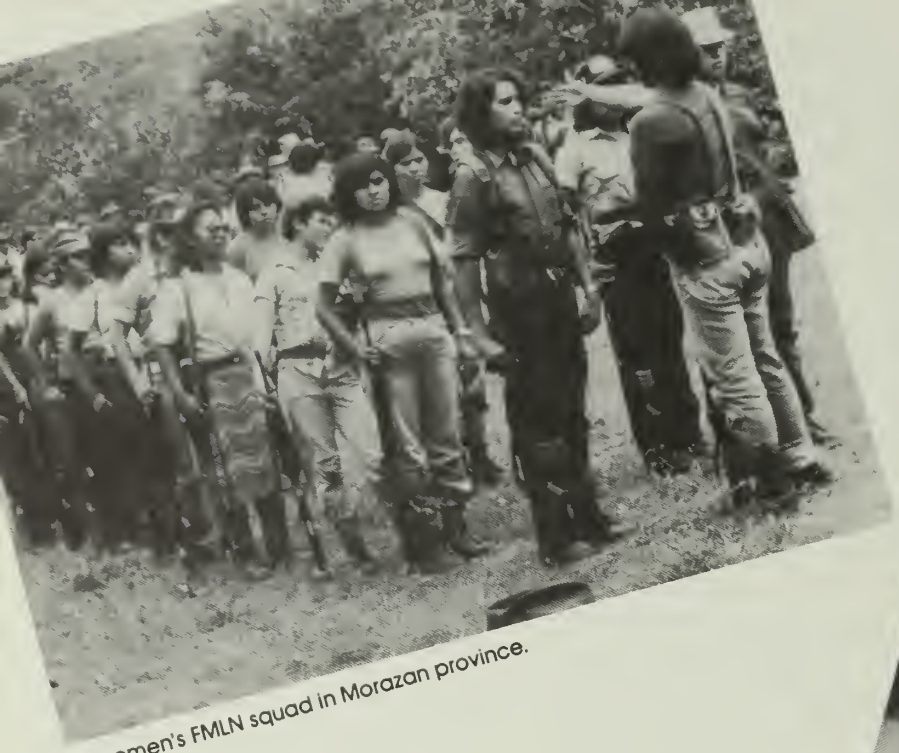
A political decision was made which overrode the concerns the film people had about the home-movie quality of small-format video but corresponded to the demands of the larger project. From this point on, members of the collective began to stay in the zones as something like war correspondents, living with the campesinos, moving with the guerrillas, becoming a permanent element in the life and work of the countryside. The collective expanded to include anyone who had a concerted interest in the project. Salvadorans with no expertise other than their participation in the subject itself began to produce their own media. In most cases they taught themselves how to use the equipment, depending initially on the experience of the handful of people who had some formal training in film and video. Operating not as professionals but as activists within the community, they made—are making — the camera a thing less strange among the people. It has become another familiar instrument of the ongoing work.

They now shoot whatever they can, wherever they can, keeping in mind the current thematic directions suggested to them by the military and political developments as analyzed by the collective command structure of RVS and the FMLN. They don't film with scripts. That would presuppose a knowledge of what will happen on any given day, and so would not adequately reflect the continuously unfolding exigencies of war. Instead, they film with the purpose of building as big an archive as possible, out of which films can be edited according to the demands of the information war being waged in El Salvador and elsewhere.

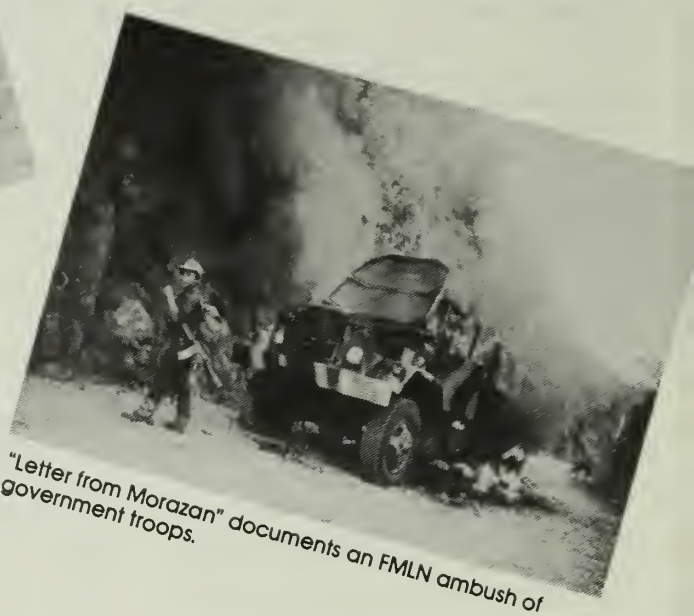
Those demands are varied. Earlier, while the film collective was grappling with the problems of international distribution, people in the liberated zones wanted to use the films and tapes to relate information about the rest of the country, about the level of guerrilla military preparedness, and for training in diverse military techniques. Betamax equipment and some capacity for mobile television units has enormously increased these possibilities. When guerrilla units arrive in a village, they bring not only their military capability but also people from mass organizations, health care workers, educators, and tapes that update the progress of the war and the organization in the zones. These elements become the basis for discussions in the village.



Radio Venceremos's mobile video units bring news to rural Salvadorans.



A women's FMLN squad in Morazan province.



"Letter from Morazan" documents an FMLN ambush of government troops.

Discussion is the key to the difference in faith and approach between RVS and, say, U.S. network coverage which comes to its conclusions—certainly about El Salvador—outside of any popular exchange with either Salvadoran or U.S. citizens. That's possibly too easy a point to make, but stark contrasts are useful in evaluating what these films are trying to do. *Decision to Win* and *Morazan* set out to methodically describe what was unimaginable to anyone outside the liberated zones: a vibrant, living history pulled out of what we have generally understood to be the shambles of Salvadoran culture. After the reorganization of the film collective, RVS produced *Letter from Morazan* (1982), *Sowing Hope* (1983), *Time of Daring* (1983), and the current release, *BRAZ* (Brigada Rafael Arce Zablah). Built on the foundation of the first two films, these show historical aspects of the revolution as it evolves under the pressure of U.S. collaboration with the army.

Letter from Morazan documents the Comandante Gonzalo campaign, one of a series of military initiatives that stripped the Salvadoran army of the ability to defend itself without a radical increase in the U.S. military presence. *Sowing Hope* shows the Church's participation in the communal life of campesinos in the liberated zones. *Time of Daring* and *BRAZ* together present complementary versions of the dynamic between the army, the FMLN fighting brigades, and the third decisive factor—U.S. intervention.

"If you see a guy perched in a tree, don't worry: this meeting is being filmed as testimony," says Comandante Ana Guadalupe Martinez during a military/political analysis in *Letter.* Indeed. The easy play between combatants, campesinos, camera, and cameraperson sets a remarkable tone for this letter, a sweet and light narrative that begins, "Dear Comrades, we have nine videocassettes of the battle. Just think!" Such brief remarks overlay sequences of battle, the surrender of soldiers, the first footage ever taken of the handing over of prisoners to the International Red Cross, and the exquisite Zen-like training of guerrillas to move silently across any terrain, under any conditions.

The economy of language mixed with an increasingly intent visual focus on the players is deeply refined in *Time of Daring,* the jewel of all RVS productions to date. Made after the U.S. invasion of Grenada, it describes the evolving standoff between the FMLN and the U.S. military as the Salvadoran army dissolves into a U.S. dependent. The film is a montage, juxtaposing edit by edit how it is on the army side with how it is on the guerrilla side. For anyone used to watching identifiable good guys and bad guys on U.S. television, this is a challenge to concentration—just the sort of challenge RVS is after. Somehow, somewhere, they came into possession of a considerable amount of footage from the other side. We see a beauty pageant in San Salvador cutting to a goose-stepping army, soldiers undergoing their bootcamp training with U.S. military advisers, wounded soldiers being shoved onto helicopters or dropped down next to an upright comrade who talks like a Marine about his elite training in the United States. In each case the footage is matched by a melodious cut to conditions among the guerrillas: the care with which guerrillas move among their people, the care with which the wounded are met, the depth with which they can analyze their military situation, and their prescient understanding of what they are facing from the U.S. All this is done without fanfare. The army is not announced to us. Each time we switch to a group of fighters, we can judge from their morale and statements which is their side. In the same way that we have been able to watch guerrillas fend for themselves in front of the camera, we can gauge through pace and tone the disposition of army regulars who appear to display a range of emotion—from arrogance to demoralization—without the categorical interference of their superiors.

Time of Daring builds its case on imagery. It is nearly without verbal rhetoric. It doesn't attempt to explain the entire history and culture of El Salvador. It resists the didacticism of *Decision to Win* to get to another point: U.S. intervention is not good for Salvadorans, and a great many Salvadorans are devoting their lives to resisting it. This visually lush and verbally spare message has produced some conflict in North American filmmaking circles. There is a sense among us, understandably, that North Americans need intact explanations before they can begin to



Radio Venceremos's current release, "BRAZ," records cooperation between the popular army and civilians.

The Radio Venceremos System depends on contributions by international groups and individuals for its income and to fulfill its production needs. Donations of the following equipment would be helpful:

¾" and Betamax blank videotapes
video cameras
audio tape recorders
shortwave radios

Donations or information requests can be sent to:

El Salvador Film and Video Project

Box 1006, San Francisco, CA 94101, (415) 826-5691

Box 57441, Los Angeles, CA 90057, (213) 381-6793

799 Broadway, Suite 325, New York, NY 10003, (212) 989-0541

Senal de Libertad (Signal of Freedom), the publication of Radio Venceremos, is available from El Salvador Information Center, Box 421965, San Francisco, CA 94142, in Spanish and English editions.

Radio Venceremos films and videotapes are distributed by Icarus Films, 200 Park Avenue South, Room 1319, New York, NY 10003, (212) 674-3375.

understand what's going on beyond our borders. When RVS asked for help on the English version, they were encouraged to develop a political commentary to go along with the film, thus bridging this explanation gap.

They refused, first, because they weren't about to make different films for different publics. The global message was, and is, "This is what's happening right now in El Salvador." North Americans will see the fundamentals pertinent to them, that the "terrorists" of El Salvador seem to include a great portion of its people, that Caspar Weinberger is running around in combat zones, and that the introduction of U.S. combat troops seems to be dangerously close.

The second reason involves political media's relationship to its desired audience. For anyone engaged in creating an alternative media in the U.S., there is a tremendous pressure to keep up with and educate against the abounding disinformation about the state of the world. For RVS to respond to this pressure, they would have to drop a story told in their own terms in favor of a facts-and-figures history lesson whose terms are defined by the U.S. government. Speaking for RVS, Martin says:

> We thought, there exist a lot of films that have an educational approach to the people. We don't need to make another of these films. We don't have the credibility with people in the U.S. to tell them how to see things in El Salvador. We have all the right—and that is what we are doing—to tell them how we are seeing it. But it should be the American people who get into the discussion with their own people about how they see it. That's not our work. We won't make educational films for the U.S., that's impossible. So we said, we have to make a film based on pictures; they have to see what happens. We will give only the elements of text or letters necessary to understand, but no kind of interpretation. Our interpretation is inside the editing, the contrasts we put together. But we don't talk to the American people, we want to show them.

RVS talks to its own people. A primary tenet of their work rests on the belief that a people combining adequate information with the freedom and/or provocation to discuss and analyze it is empowered to act. *Time of Daring* has not yet found an uninitiated audience here to test itself before. That job rests with the available distribution networks. The process of bringing RVS productions to public debate—through more extensive church, college, or community organizing, perhaps—will be the process that activates the intelligence of some portion of a public long in the habit of acquiescing to the cold war whims of its government.

The most compelling idea built into the films of RVS is that political media—and to a larger extent the opposition itself—cannot be a teacher of the people. It must be a conduit to provoking the conscience and self-interest of the viewer into investigation and action. These films indicate to the North American public the look and feel of the disaster it heads for in a regional war in Central America. How, and even if, they have enough impact depends on the evolution of the long battle for adequate distribution that confronts independent producers here.

RVS created itself from a dearth of materials and expertise, and from an abundance of nerve. It presents a challenge to the fact of central intelligence—to the proliferating information about the Third World kept out of focus by network coverage and government cover-up. It is useful for us, the watchers and makers of political media, to consider the ways in which these productions shape and are shaped by the eye-level concerns of their projected audience. That audience is the people of El Salvador whose history and future, the films point out, inevitably reach into ours. The challenge here begins in our ability to wrestle the terms of our history into the diverse hands of the people who live it, the North American public. As some cheerful militant said during a Radio Venceremos broadcast, "If you hear imperialist interference, switch to another channel."

Jane Creighton is a poet and organizer with the International Work Brigades/New York.

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BOOK REVIEW

TAKING STOCK OF THE INFORMATION MARKET

Information and the Crisis Economy
by Herbert I. Schiller
Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1984, 133 pp., $22.50

Most likely, you've seen the ads: if you don't buy your daughter or son a pc, the kid will grow up disadvantaged. On TV, the young man detrains —a college dropout left behind by his computer-literate peers. The little girl is presented with a computer to ensure her employability 15 years hence. A full-page, four-color ad in the *New York Times Magazine* pitches software designed for children four to eight years old: "...when they play at the computer, they won't be playing around." The marketing ploy at work here appeals to a kind of social and personal anxiety more profound than concern about bad breath: the fear of economic failure, of exclusion from the rosy future promised by the Information Revolution. Such anxiety is hardly unwarranted, but, as usual, ad campaigns attempt to transform reasonable worries into shopping trips. In these terms, the new electronic product or service will allow entry into privileged ranks; the purchase of this or that brand of high-tech toy assures access to information and, thus, social mobility.

With any hard sell, some doubts surface, but most projections for what's announced as the Communications or Information Revolution accept its inevitability. This is not surprising, given its present course, set and largely controlled by three major centers of power—corporations, the military, and the state—of the most powerful nation—the United States. Beyond our borders, however, challenges to U.S. hegemony in information production, distribution, and profits are becoming more insistent (e.g., the UNESCO proposal for a New World Information Order, which met with extreme hostility from U.S. media industries and the government). At home, two clusters of dissenters work to expose and counter the political, economic, and cultural effects masked by the rhetoric of technological progress. One broadly defined group is composed of media activists and artists—those who build models for democratic uses of advanced communications technology, as well as those who rework or critique the material of mass communications in order to encourage critical consciousness. Other critics can be found in academia—some communications theorists along with a sprinkling of film and literary scholars.

Prominent in this second group is Herbert Schiller, professor of communications at the University of California, San Diego, whose latest book, *Information and the Crisis Economy,* considers recent developments in communications policy in relation to international economic conditions. Schiller describes this double movement in terms of the increasing privatization of information propelled by the expanding domain of transnational corporations. In this he returns to many of the topics and analyses presented in his previous book, *Who Knows? Information in the Age of the Fortune 500* (Ablex, 1981). Although overlapping, the two texts are not redundant, but complementary. The earlier book details the process of commodification of information and the social divisions based on control of access to information which result. Although he convincingly delineates the immense influence of transnational corporations in shaping our information-based society, Schiller doesn't draw a monolithic picture; indeed, he concludes with a chapter on "The Insecure Foundations of the *Fortune 500*'s Information Age." *Information and the Crisis Economy* further elaborates the contradictions which plague and, to some extent, are produced by the same transnational corporations (with the U.S. government and military contributing to their expansionist ambitions). For instance, a search for new markets engages the advertising apparatus, which, in turn, creates demands for consumer goods. Schiller points out how this consumer imperative can backfire: "If growth cannot be maintained, the consumerist ethos falters. Indeed, it is likely to become a source of growing dissatisfaction." Another example of the threats to unimpeded expansion and profiteering by the information industries is the international debate over the free flow of information. Satellite telecommunications technology now makes it possible for information to invisibly cross national boundaries, but the principles of national sovereignty are not so easily transgressed. Schiller cites arrogant corporate and official U.S. claims that the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution justifies unlimited access to all markets. But, he then reminds us, "The anti-imperialist struggles of the twentieth century are too recent to have been expunged from popular consciousness. Genuine national independence and sovereignty...remain powerful aspirations." Banking on new technologies to bail out a deeply troubled market economy—with high levels of unemployment, devastating plant closings, and unstable currencies undermining the capitalist order—the corporate sector seems to stir up the very problems which spur it on. Rather than heralding an era of peace and prosperity, Schiller demonstrates how "the Information Revolution is proceeding much like the Industrial Revolution that preceded it."

These are some of the dialectical threads traced in this book, and the argument, as I've outlined it thus far, is similar to that in *Who Knows?*. But, beyond updating his analysis with more recent factual material, Schiller significantly extends his theoretical inquiry in a chapter titled, "The Political Economy of Communications: Culture *Is* the Economy." Here he describes what he calls the "two lane road" of a corporate-controlled society: "One lane is the economy itself. The other is popular consciouness." He explores the consequences of a society where information and, therefore, culture are reduced to exchangeable commodities and their availability becomes determined by buying power: "A sheath of technological mystification obscures the rapid extension of capitalist criteria and control to terrain hitherto far less subject to its influence—the cultural process, and consciousness itself." This shift, for instance, can be detected in the ad campaigns mentioned in the opening paragraph of this review and the reshaping of concepts of education and work these imply. Schiller's observation leads to an important theoretical problem concerning the relationships between cultural production and economic relations:

> Some believe that the changed conditions in advanced capitalism require a loosening of the older, supposedly direct, material links that were believed to bind inexorably the work of artists, writers, jurists, scientists, and intellectuals to the specific needs and interests of the dominating class. The idea of "determination" is relaxed in this reading of developments, and the setting of limits is considered more appropriate.

But, he adds, a political economy of communications might reevaluate this position:

> If commercial production and sale of information are on the way to becoming dominant features of the economy that is emerging, and if they are creating a convergence between cultural and industrial production in general, the conditions that bind the cultural/communications sphere to the institutional infastructure *may be tightening* rather than loosening.
>
> *The ascendancy of commercialized information in all kinds of productive activity may make for less, not more autonomy, in creative as well as routine work.*

For media makers who work outside the culture industries, this point is especially pertinent. Alternatives to a culture tied to the interests of transnational corporations can only be formulated from an understanding of these connections. Any utopians convinced of the ultimate social good which will flow from technology and information saturation should attend to Schiller's closely argued refutation of

such ideas. And pessimists who accept a dehumanized, *1984* scenario following from corporate-military-state-communications collusion might consider the paradoxes of this dynamic spelled out in *Information and the Crisis Economy.*

Still, the incomplete consolidation of the corporate grip on communications and information and the internal contradictions of this process will not necessarily reverse the present direction. What Schiller proposes as a possible antidote to market-determined information production and flow is a concept of democratic communications: "the widest possible public access to and involvement with the means of expression, in both an active and reactive mode." Although the final section of the book examines some possibilities for undermining or resisting dominant ideology, little attention is given to creative programs. While Schiller may be correct to see alternative media as marginal—"restricted and mainly in the social interstices"—and, therefore, tangential to his project, only active, imaginative interventions and counterpractices can produce the critical consciousness he calls for. At the same time, alternative media strategies need to be informed by the intelligence of theorists like Schiller in order to be effective. Only then can a system of democratic communications be thinkable. *—Martha Gever*

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF AIVF BOARD MEETING

The AIVF and FIVF boards met January 17 and 18, 1985, at the AIVF offices. Present: Robert Richter, president; Lillian Jimenez, chair; Barton Weiss, secretary; Pearl Bowser, St. Clair Bourne, Christine Choy, Peter Kinoy, Howard Petrick, Martha Rosler, Richard Schmiechen, Lawrence Sapadin.

Lillian Jimenez urged the board to set clear quarterly goals for itself and signalled AIVF's 10th anniversary celebration as this quarter's focus.

Executive director Lawrence Sapadin reported that AIVF recently signed a new five-year lease, but with a substantial rent increase. Administrative staffing has been increased and a new screening space acquired. Plans for computerization are still pending. Sapadin also briefly reported on the conference of the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers and a November meeting of the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers.

Committees reported as follows:

Independent Radio Task Force has developed a series of options for a formal relationship with AIVF. Negotiations will proceed. Task Force views such a relationship as both feasible and desirable.

National Services Committee will develop a membership questionnaire to assess local needs and priorities for AIVF's national services.

Advocacy Committee recommended that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting reserve a portion of its advertising funds to establish a promotional fund to support the Program Fund's independent and minority programs. Open Solicitation guidelines should include specific guidelines relating to promotional support, to be developed by independent representatives and CPB staff. The committee also urged that CPB be requested to advise panel members of staff's final decision before public announcement and that staff provide reason in writing for any departure from panel recommendations.

The AIVF Board passed a committee resolution that AIVF issue a statement opposing proposed budget cuts for the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities.

Development Committee presented, and the board approved, two-year organizational goals to 1. stabilize the financial base of the organization, 2. eliminate deficits, 3. invest in office improvements, and 4. expand national services. Board further resolved that the Development Committee will present a list of potential additional FIVF board members with expertise in financial management, legal, or fundraising areas from which to select up to three new members.

Business manager Tom Sutton presented the AIVF and FIVF financial statements for FY '83–'84 and offered a resolution, passed by the board, creating a special fund for the year's 10th anniversary activities.

Jimenez reported on the status of the 10th anniversary celebration scheduled for June 4, 1985 at the Museum of Modern Art. The Board offered special thanks to administrative director Mary Guzzy for her work coordinating preparations for the event.

The board developed a procedure by which it would supplement the Indie Awards nomination list in areas where representation was weak and nominations inadequate to represent the diversity of the field. Final selection of Indie Award recipients will be made by the board at its next meeting.

AIVF member Judi Fogelman requested that the board reconsider instituting open screenings of members' work in New York (tabled at its September meeting). No further action was taken.

PRINCIPLES AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION

AIVF FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

1. The Association is a trade association of and for independent video and filmmakers.

2. The Association encourages excellence, commitment and independence; it stands for the principle that video and filmmaking is more than just a job—it goes beyond economics to involve the expression of broad human values.

3. The Association works, through the combined efforts of its membership, to provide practical, informational and moral support for independent video and filmmakers and is dedicated to ensuring the survival of, and providing for the growth of, independent video and filmmaking.

4. The Association does not limit its support to one genre, ideology, or aesthetic, but furthers diversity of vision in artistic and social consciousness.

5. The Association champions independent video and film as valuable and vital expressions of our culture and is determined, by mutual action, to open pathways toward exhibition of this work to the community at large.

AIVF RESOLUTIONS

1. To affirm the creative use of media in fostering cooperation, community and justice in human relationships without respect to age, sex, class, or religion.

2. To recognize and reaffirm the freedom of expression of the independent film and videomaker, as spelled out in the AIVF principles.

3. To promote constructive dialogue and heightened awareness among the membership of the social, artistic, and personal choices involved in the pursuit of both independent and sponsored work, via such mechanisms as screenings and forums.

4. To continue to work to strengthen AIVF's services to independents, in order to help reduce the membership's dependence on the kinds of sponsorship which encourage the compromise of personal values.

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MARGARET MEAD FILM FESTIVAL: COMING OF AGE



Courtesy Filmmakers

John Cohen's "Mountain Music of Peru" depicted one corner of the "worldwide picture of humanity" at the Margaret Mead Film Festival.

The annual Margaret Mead Film Festival was initiated eight years ago in honor of the pioneering anthropologist's fiftieth anniversary as a curator at the Museum of Natural History—"a tribute to her name," says Malcom Arth, festival director and chair of the department of education at the museum. In the hands of Arth, the festival has remained true to Mead's vision of bringing visual anthropology to the broadest audience.

The festival's intention, says Arth, is to present a "worldwide picture of humanity." Over the years the traditional concerns of anthropologists have been reflected in the festival's choice of films; last year's themes included family, ritual, urban life, spiritual communities, conflicting worlds, and elders and generations. Forty-one films (out of approximately 200 screened by the selection committee) were shown to audiences numbered in the thousands. Each is presented in one of four auditoriums whose capacities range from 80 to 970 seats. Filmgoers are free to wander from theater to theater attending the simultaneously running programs.

Anthropological films are a subset of the documentary genre but are not to be confused with purely political films which—along with other documentary subsets such as performance, architecture, and science—are not accepted by this festival. The festival selection overlaps somewhat with that of Cinema du Reel, which is organized in the spring by the library of the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, although the French festival also includes sociological and political documentaries. Arth says he and his 1985 co-programmers, Jonathan Stack and Nathaniel Johnson, are anthropologically oriented and therefore concentrate on the "accuracy of a film's ethnology—film as film may not be as important as an anthropologist's 30-year commitment." Mark Jury (*For All People, For All Time*, screened at the festival in 1984) said Margaret Mead shows "pure anthropological films." Last year's offerings included *Willy and Myriam,* by David Benaventi (Chile) in the family category; *The Way of Dead Indians,* by Jean Arland and Michel Perrin, about religious rituals; and *Xunan* by Margrit Keller and Peter von Gunten in the "conflicting worlds" category.

The Margaret Mead Festival has grown and established itself over the years so that it is now usually approached by filmmakers instead of having to solicit work. Programmers from other festivals, such as Cinema du Reel's Marielle Delorme, attend. Among the festival's most important charcteristics are the appearance of filmmakers and anthropologists before and after screenings, and the participatory audiences. Diego Echeverria, whose *Los Sures* premiered at Margaret Mead in 1984 and subsequently played at the Tyneside, Havana, and New York film festivals, called Margaret Mead "one of the best festivals around," citing its "very encouraging audiences" which he "otherwise wouldn't reach." He described the Mead audience as "sophisticated" compared to that of the New York Film Festival where, he said, "documentaries very often play a secondary role, hidden by the aura surrounding feature films." He added, "A lot of filmmakers and film students interested in documentaries attend the festival. You hear wonderful conversations—relationships develop in the lobbies. There is a vivid interchange of ideas." Echeverria was clearly moved by what he called the "refreshing sense of seeing others working on different subjects with different perceptions and different sets of eyes." But, like other filmmakers, Echeverria said there was not enough time for filmmakers to meet.

For Echeverria's film—which the festival program describes as "portraits of five Hispanic residents of Brooklyn's Williamsburg neighborhood"—there was an important "intellectual community" in attendance: "people who are teaching Latin American subjects and urban issues." But for the committed filmmaker the rewards of the festival go beyond the response his or her own film receives. "There is interesting work you can't see elsewhere," Echeverria said. "Brazilian, Chilean..." Filmmaker Mark Rance—whose five-year verite journey into the intensely personal politics of his family, *Death and the Singing Telegram,* was shown at the festival last year—said, "The real test for me was that people [at the festival] talked about what's in the films, rather than just the technical aspects." Rance says his type of film—shot from a single point of view, by one person, with one camera, over an extended period of time—is well-represented at the festival. "Ethnographic filmmakers are into the first person," he said. Arth added that the trend in ethnographic filmmaking is to "involve the subjects in the film itself. Much less often does a crew go in shooting as outsiders." He noted that there is "a willingness to acknowledge the presence of the filmmaker" and to "allow people to speak for themselves."

Like the American Film Festival, Margaret Mead offers distributors an opportunity to see films in a theater with an audience. Mark Jury said, "People can look at your film without you having to go door to door. Museum people read about the festival and look forward to it." The rental fee and small travel stipend offered by the festival were described by Jury, not ungratefully, as a "token in the right direction. Usually you



Courtesy Filmmaker

Marion Eaton and underground filmmaker George Kuchar in Curt McDowell's "Sparkle's Tavern," screened at the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

suffer a net loss with a festival." The staff, Jury said, is "top-notch. They do what they say they're going to do. They're on your side."

In 1984, for the first time, the festival charged admission above the pay-what-you-wish cost of entering the museum. Apparently it has built up a loyal enough following to be able to sell tickets as a way of subsidizing and hopefully institutionalizing the event. This year, the festival received its first grant from the New York State Council on the Arts; previously, support had come exclusively from the museum, although there was no permanent budget line. According to Arth, ticket sales now cover one-half of costs.

Margaret Mead does not accept video entries, although it has programmed some videotapes, such as Hubert Smith's four-part *The Living Maya,* screened in 1981. Arth explained, "It's an enormous task just looking at film. Video is another festival." But he added that "video may be the wave of the future."

Among Arth's most tangible concerns is funding for the training of talented filmmakers who are "without independent means." He says that "a lot of independent filmmakers come from privileged backgrounds," implying that the diversity already apparent at Margaret Mead could be enhanced many times over by input from a broader cross section of the population. He is also concerned that "people who have made great documentaries are moving into features." But his hope is that "like a great actor who returns to the theater, periodically they'll go back to documentaries and use their skill and talent for another purpose besides straight entertainment." It takes, he says, "a commitment to a value system." —*Robert Aaronson*

Deadline: present until May 1. Festival will be held Sept. 9–12. Formats: 16 and 35mm. Contact: Malcolm Arth or Jonathan Stack, Education Dept., American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at West 79th St., New York, NY 10024; (212) 873-1070.

SAN FRANCISCO LESBIAN AND GAY FESTIVALS: A CABLECAR NAMED DESIRE

Nineteen eighty-four was a very good year for the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. According to festival director Michael Lumpkin, it was the first time in eight years of existence that the festival was in the black. In response to its improved programming, better attendance, and expanded coverage by the local non-gay press, *Variety* included the festival in its list of 1985 festivals, and Frameline, the group which organizes the festival, became one of only two lesbian/gay organizations in California to receive a grant from the California Arts Council.

The San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival was started in June 1977 as a two-hour program of short gay and lesbian films selected from open entry and showing during Gay Pride Week. The fifth festival in 1981 saw a dramatic and risky expansion to six days of programs. The festival added contemporary features such as *A Woman Like Eve* (The Netherlands) and historical lesbian films like *Maedchen in Uniform* (1932), and guests such as Vito Russo, who gave a talk on "The Celluloid Closet: The History of Homosexuality in the Movies." In 1984, almost 50 films were shown, with about half solicited by the festival.

Lumpkin, who is also president of the Frameline board of directors, describes Frameline as "an organization dedicated to the presentation and preservation of lesbian and gay cinema." The board of 12 boasts only two active filmmakers, assistant director of the festival John Wright and film editor Jeff Watts. Another board member is videomaker John Canalli, who directs the San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Video Festival. In October, Frameline presented the West Coast premiere of *Before Stonewall*; this year, planned events include screenings of a documentary on Paul Cadmus and *Abuse,* the latest film by Arthur Bressan, Jr.

Liz Stevens, filmmaker and co-owner of Iris Films, a feminist distribution company, was a judge in both 1982 and 1983. She describes the range of entries as "very personal, some very strange, some very dear." The primary criterion

for selection is "content above anything else." Stevens noted, "We look for something that rings true, that isn't offensive, and we're not afraid of propaganda films." Lumpkin echoed her comments, citing as a main consideration "the honesty of the statement that the filmmaker is making, although it may not be what the audience wants to see." Technical considerations are secondary; however, an unreadable (e.g. inaudible or out of focus) film will be rejected.

The Castro Theater, where some festival films are shown, is located in the heart of the gay district and is a movie palace if ever there was one, with 1,500 seats, grandiose art deco interior, and a functioning Wurlitzer organ. The festival's other venue, the Roxie, is a considerably more modest repertory theater situated in the Mission, where women's bars and bookstores coexist with Hispanic corner markets. Filmmaker Curt McDowell says both theaters draw their regular clientele to the festival.

Awards are given in the categories of best feature, best documentary, best short, and best Super-8 film.

The solicited feature films, tracked through a growing network of worldwide contacts, receive the lion's share of prepublicity and draw the audiences. Inevitably, it's also the feature films that get picked up for theatrical runs (the Greek *Angel,* the Spanish *Il Diputado,* Nestor Almendros's *Improper Conduct*) and for other festivals. *The Sprinter* (West Germany) and *The Black Lizard* (Japan) were scheduled for the 1984 New York Gay Film Festival after showing up in San Francisco's.

Last fall, Lumpkin took a program of Super-8 gay and lesbian films to a new gay and lesbian film festival in Brussels. The Belgian organizers will reciprocate with a similar package for this year's San Francisco festival.

The San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Video Festival, also under the auspices of Frameline, is run almost single-handedly by John Canalli, although he calls upon the support of a screening committee of six. The video festival accepts ¾" and ½" VHS, on all subjects, but the videomaker must be lesbian or gay. Of 50 entires last year, 15 were screened, and 11 were included in a "Traveling Festival" tape that was offered to suitable outlets such as bars and campus networks across the country.

Canalli admits that last year's video festival was negligibly attended, suffering from too long a program and too little publicity. After four years of viewing entries for the festival, Canalli now advises videomakers to keep their pieces under 10 minutes. He hosts a weekly half-hour show on public access TV, where he shows tapes selected from festival entries. He says he is desperate to see more work from women, blacks, and third world videomakers, and that his aim is to create a network of gay video artists who do serious, quality work.

The film festival is also desperate for films by women—"a good lesbian feature is a real coup," says Liz Stevens. Michael Lumpkin says he would like to see more U.S. features. But many filmmakers worry that screening at a gay/lesbian festival will "ghettoize" their film.

Ironically, efforts by Frameline and other gay film groups to open doors for lesbian and gay filmmakers are starting to result in greater competition from "straight" festivals for their films. San Francisco freelance film critic Penni Kimmel points to the inclusion of major gay films like *The Terence Davies Trilogy* and Bressan's *Abuse* in the 1984 San Francisco International Film Festival, which took place a couple of months before the lesbian and gay festival.

Although Kimmel criticizes the quality and amount of the festival's publicity last year, she describes the event as "fantastically successful." The *San Francisco Chronicle,* the city's largest daily, ran reviews of some festival films and filmmaker interviews in its Sunday arts section. The gay and lesbian press has been consistently supportive of the festival. Last year's festival budget was $33,000; this year it is $40,000. Hopefully, the increase in budget will be reflected by expanded media coverage and in a maintenance of last year's quality. —*Fran Christie*

The ninth San Franciso International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival will take place June 24-30. Deadline: April 15. For film entry forms, write to Frameline, c/o Michael Lumpkin, 650 Guerrero St., San Francisco, CA 94110. For video entry forms, write to John Canalli, 182-B, San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 861-0843.

Fran Christie is a freelance writer and editor in Berkeley, California.

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LOCARNO: BIG CHEESE

The Locarno International Film Festival is the "big cheese" of Swiss events. Endowed with a fun-in-the-sun location, it's a festival that attracts a large tourist population and ardent cinephiles. Director David Streiff's program ranges from megabudget films out of competition to a retrospective of films from the Italian studio Lux from 1934–1954. Sandwiched between these popular items is the competition; in 1984, Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger than Paradise,* which came to Locarno via Cannes, won the gold leopard. Rob Nilsson's *Signal 7* was also accepted by the festival but pulled out at the last minute due to

what were labeled "technical inadequacies" (no subtitles, bad print). Keep in mind.

A second-year offshoot of the festival is the TV movies competition. Last year it received 102 entries; 16 were chosen to compete, and 69 were placed in an information program. Over 22 countries were represented; several U.S. entries were shown, including Bill Duke's *The Killing Floor.*

Locarno's projection facilities are excellent. A bar and cafe is an easy meeting ground for filmmakers. Press conferences are numerous and well-organized (French, German or Italian translations only), and the media coverage is extensive. A small film market has been organized for the first time this year. Small touches like an exhibition of Fellini drawings or Swiss cinema screenings round out an agreeable festival experience.

—Jacqueline Leger

The festival is held in August. Selection is completed by mid-May. Contact: Locarno International Film Festival, Festival Office c.p. 186, 6601 Muralto-Locarno, Swizerland.

Jacqueline Leger is a filmmaker and journalist in Switzerland.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement,** and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

● *BLACKLIGHT,* July 27–Aug. 3 (approx.), Chicago. For the 4th consecutive year director Floyd Webb hopes to compile an international selection of the newest & best works for the world of progressive & international black film & videomaking. Countries previously represented include parts of Africa, England, the West Indies, & New Guinea. Webb will be traveling to Burkina Faso to invite works screened as FESPACO '85. Festival invites submissions for black film & videomakers with works on any subject, or others with works on important black subjects. In 1984 Blacklight screened St. Clair Bourne's *On the Boulevard & Maulala* by Cuba's Sergio Geral, who was in attendance, as well as Allen Greenberg's *The Land of Look Behind.* A retrospective of Senegelese filmmaker Ousmane Senbene is in the works. 7,000–8,000 filmgoers expected to attend. Noncompetitive. Rental fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, ¾" video. Contact: Floyd Webb, 1331 West Lunt 1E, Chicago, 1L 60626; (312) 225-1800 or 248-3457.

● *CALIFORNIA STUDENT MEDIA FESTIVAL,* June 1, San Diego. The 19th showcase for films & video produced by students from kindergarten through community college gives awards for news, documentary, drama, animation etc., for works under 10 mins. This year's theme is "The 1980's: A Decade of Change." Deadlines: May 1. Formats: S-8, 16mm, Beta, VHS, ¾" & open reel. Contact: Bill Male, Communications Dept., Mesa High School, 1051 Reagan Rd.; San Diego, CA 92126; (619) 566-2262, ext. 258. Your teacher must sign the entry form.

● *CHINSEGUT FILM/VIDEO CONFERENCE,* May (tent.), Reddington Beach, FL. 8th annual event organized by Atlantic Productions in Tampa. '84 participants included Les Blank, Steve Seigal, Dan Appelby & Bruce Carlson, Andy Anderson, Katherine Matheson, Ralph Arlyck, & Phil Trumbo. Organizer Stan Kozma says that they're interested in presenting a "balance in media," including documentary, personal film, video art, performance, & "non-proscenium exhibition of films." Audiences run to 1,000 over 3 days. Registration: $30. Hotel rooms at the Charming Tides Hotel are $32 per night. Contact: Atlantic Productions, 10002 Lola St., Tampa, FL 33612; (813) 971-2547.

● *MAINE STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL,* June 1, Portland. Open to work by Maine's filmmakers under 19. Sponsored by the Maine Alliance of Media Arts, awards are given in elementary, jr. high & high school categories. Last year's winners available on videocassette for rental. Local NBC affiliate WCSH broadcasts winners. Deadline: May 15. Contact: Huey; (217) 773-1130.

● *MILL VALLEY FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL,* Sept. 19–26, CA. Programmer John Webber calls Mill Valley a "celebration of film," noting that his selection is "broad & eclectic," light & more accessible than San Francisco, from which he nonetheless gets a number of works. Screenings in 2 Mill Valley theaters show features & shorts, & another auditorium shows a wide variety of video. Last year's selections included *Jack Kerouac's America, Sparkle's Tavern, The Gospel According to Al Green,* & over 40 others. Video featured music, art & documentary. Weber is particularly interested in making filmmakers accessible to the public & encourages discussions before & after screenings. Deadline: June 1. Formats: 16 & 35mm features, & shorts under 15 min. For video contact: Zoe Elton, Richard Jett. Festival director is Rita Cahill, 80 Lomita Dr., Suite 20, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-5256.

● *NEWARK MUSEUM OF BLACK FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL,* July & Aug., NJ. 1st competition for this annual showcase of independent & commercial films by black filmmakers or about black subjects. Categories include animation, documentary, experimental, & narrative. No entry fee. Auditorium seats 450 & is always full for free events. Fee: $20–$25. Judges include filmmakers and *Uptown Saturday Night* screenwriter Richard Wesley. Call for deadline. Contact: Mary Sue Sweeney, Newark Museum, 49 Washington St., Box 540, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 733-6600.

● *PHILADELPHIA INTERNATOINAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL,* July 24–28. Theme for 8th "Philafilm" is "Through the Eyes of Minority & Independent Directors." All entries selected receive public screening. Last year, Pierre Barton's *The Wedding* won Best Film & Gerald Saldo & Joan Engel's *No Immediate Danger* won Best Video. Craig Davison was informed in the midst of the festival last year that his film *The Sun Was Always Shining Someplace: Life in the Negro Baseball Leagues* had won a cash award, but he never received it & his film was never returned. Bureaucratic incompetence rather than reckless disregard seems to be the problem. Insure your film! Separate market for entries out of competition. Although independent is byword of fest, categories included "client/product, ad agency, & distributor." Papers & articles invited for festival souvenir book. Fees: $50–$100. Deadline: May 15. Contact: Laurence Smallwood or Brenda Collins, International Association of Motion Picture & Televison Producers/Urban Coalition, 121 N. Broad St., 6th fl., Philadelphia, PA 19107; (215) 977-2831.

● *PSA-MPD AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* July 29–Aug. 4, Seattle. Billed as "the oldest continuous running festival in the world," the Photographic Society of America promotes work of amateur filmmakers & screens winning films in amateur, student, & commercial categories under 50 mins. at their annual convention. Includes fiction, documentary, experimental, travel & narrative. Fees: $12–$17. Deadline: May 1. Contact: Tim Kinnally, Chair, 6618 Parkside Dr., Tinley Pk., 1L 60477; (312) 532-2540.

● *SLICE OF LIFE SHOWCASE,* July 12–13, State College, PA. Filmmakers from the Mid-Atlantic region are invited to submit work in conjunction with the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts, where 250,000 are expected. Films should document "simply and realistically the unique performances of everyday life—those moments of truth & beauty that would otherwise go unrecognized." Filmmakers invited to attend screening & participate in discussions. Cash awards, accommodations & travel stipend. Fee. $10. Deadline: May 1. Format: 16mm. Contact: Slice of Life, 848 Elmwood St., State College, PA 16801; (814) 234-7886.

● *VERMONT INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL,* Aug. 20–24, Montpelier. Organized by Walter Ungerer & Dark Horse Films to bring alternative, independent filmmaking to northern New England. Each day is devoted to a different filmmaker who is invited to lecture & discuss their work. Previous guests have included Ellen Hovde & Grace Paley, Christine Dall & Randall Conrad. No open call, but Ungerer says filmmakers are welcome to send resumes & bios for future reference. Program sold out last year. Local TV & newspapers give extensive coverage. 1985 will feature a Norman McClaren retrospective & an appearance by Manny Kirchheimer with his *Stations of the Elevated.* Deadline: June 30. Contact: Dark Horse Films, PO Box 982, Montpelier VT 05602; (802) 223-3967.

● *VIDEO FREE HAWAII,* June 15, Honolulu. This all-volunteer group programmed 17 tapes for a day-long exhibit in 1984, its 9th outing. Over 600 people attended. Event attracts lots of local press. According to director Steve Mobley, it's a combination of promoting local talent & bringing in work that would not normally be seen in Hawaii. "We're partly political, partly artistic, & partly educational." In-

cluded in last year's event was work by Skip Blumberg, as well as the nationwide *Disarmament Survey.* Due to federal funding cuts in the State Arts Fund, plans for a gala 10th have been scaled down, but the event remains very popular. Deadline: May 15. Include return postage and reusable mailer. No fee. 1 hour max. running time. Format: ¾". Contact: Video Fee Hawaii, 2106 Oahu Ave., Honolulu, HI 96822; (808)955-1918.

● *WES FRANCIS AUDIOVISUAL EXCELLENCE (WAVE) CONTEST,* Oct. 25–27, Dallas. Sponsored by the National Recreation & Park Assoc. Work must relate to recreation & parks, e.g. sports, museums, leisure. 3-day national meeting attracts 5,000–6,000 members of NRPA. Maker has option of giving NRPA non-profit distribution rights. Festival director Mary Kroencke says they're interested in broadening the scope of submissions. No fee. Deadline: May 31. Formats: 16mm & ¾". Contact: Mary Kroencke, NRPA, 3101 Park Center Dr., Alexandria, VA 22302; (703) 820-4940.

FOREIGN

● *AMERICAN MEDICAL WRITERS ASSOCIATION,* October 30–Nov. 2, Montreal. 10th annual event promotes "film and videos produced for the medical & allied health sciences." Categories include professional education, patient education, public information, public relations/promotion. Winners shown at AMWA annual conference. Dramatic films not eligible; films must be completed since 1983. Deadline: May 15. Fees: $70–$85. Include return postage for works submitted. Format: 16mm & ¾". Contact: Carolyn W. Capowski, UNC School of Pharmacy, Beard Hall 200H, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

● *BANFF TELEVISION FESTIVAL,* June 2–8, Canada. Competition for films made for TV & aired April 1983–85. Categories include drama, documentary & children's. Executive seminars & on-demand screening facilities enhance business atmosphere. U.S. submissions in '83 included WQED/Pittsburgh, Les Blank's *Burden of Dreams,* Skip Sweeney's *My Father Sold Studebakers,* J.T. Takagi & Chris Choy's *Bittersweet Survival,* & Meg Switzgable's *In Our Water.* Fee: $100. Deadline: April (forms); April 8 (films). Format: ¾" only. Applications & attendance registration forms available at AIVF (send SASE) Contact: Banff TV Festival, Box 1020, Banff, Alberta, Canada, TOL OCO; (403) 767-3060.

● *ODENSE FILM FESTIVAL,* Aug. 4–10, Denmark. Biennial event "in the spirit of Hans Christian Anderson" for films under 60 mins. In 1983, 200 were submitted & 103 selected for competition. Formerly restricted to animated & puppet films, festival now welcomes "avant-garde, abstract, experimental, surrealistic, underground" works. By-word is "creative delight." Even the jury is selected "in the spirit of H.C.A." Cash prizes of $5,000 & $2,500. Maker agrees to broadcast on Danish TV for payment. Formats: 16 & 35mm. Deadline: May (forms); June (films). Event includes filmmakers seminars. Applications available at AIVF (send SASE). Contact: Association of Danish Filmmakers, Vindegarde 18, DK-5000, Odense C Denmark; tel. 9-13-13-72 EXT. 4294.

● *SECOND INTERNATIONAL SUPER-8 FILM FESTIVAL IN SWEDEN,* April 19–21, Lund City. Organized by a group at the University of Lund. Application requires a still from the film or of the director & a "short summary of the film or the idea behind it." Work selected for competition will tour throughout Scandinavia & be returned by May 25. Deadline: April 2. Fee: $9. Contact: Super-8 Festival, Kursverksanheten Vid Lunde Universitet Skomakaragtan 8, S-223 50, Lund, Sweden; tel. 46-46-11-77-20: telex 33533. Applications available at AIVF (send SASE).

● *THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN ARTS TRUST FUND ANNUAL VIDEO FESTIVAL,* Oct. & Nov., University of Botswana. "Purpose of the festival is to provide Botswana audiences with alternative insights into South Africa on issues such as forced removals, death in detention, police brutality & different forms of resistance to oppression." Videos exhibited included *To the Last Drop of Blood & UDF Launch,* from the United Democratic Front; the BBC's documentary *Sandra Laing, & Six Feet of the Country,* based on a short story by Nadine Gordimer. The Trust Fund is a support organization for progressive filmmakers. Contact: Southern African Arts Trust Fund, PO Box 2037, Garborone, Botswana.

● *VELDEN FILM FESTIVAL OF NATIONS,* June 3–9, Austria. Well-established, government supported annual "amateur" event awards prizes for S-8 & 16mm films not exceeding 25 mins. Categories include documentation, travel, games & fantasy/experimental. Films may be aired on Austrian TV. Include return postage. Reservations for attendance includes parties, discussions, dinners & "free admission to the gambling casino at Velden." Deadline: April 30. Contact: W. Elsner or Hans Falle, Organisationskmitec Kurdirektion A-9220 Velden a. W.S., Kartner Kustura; tel. 04274/2105; telex 42-2604. Regulations available at AIVF (send SASE).

● *VENICE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* Aug.–Sept., Italy. The 1984 selection committee, according to director Gian Luigi Rondi, screened 46 U.S. features in preparation for the festival & selected only 1: *Maria's Lovers.* So go figure. Traditionally, commercial pictures highlight this event, but last year's 1st TV section afforded independents a chance to be seen on the Lido. Included were William Duke's *The Killing Floor & Haunting Passion* by John Korty; *The Dollmaker* by Daniel Petrie was scheduled but pulled out after screening at Locarno. *Wildrose* by John Hanson unspooled in the Critic's Week. 1984 also premiered an MTV-like sidebar. Jerry Barrish sent a a copy of his film *Recent Sorrows* for selection & received neither a response nor his tape. Contact: Spettacolo-TV San Marco, Ca' Giustunian 30100, Venezia, Italy; tel: 4170 0311; telex: 410685 BLE VEI.

● *WELLINGTON FILM FESTIVAL,* July, New Zealand. 1984 was the 13th year for this 15-day non-competitive event. 30,000 attended 54 features. Selections made from other "recognized" festivals. This major Pacific showcase includes independent work in 16mm among an international mix of commercial productions. Director Bill Gosden, in defending his choice of *A Woman in Flames* to open fest, told *Variety,* "A good abrasive, controversial film opening should be what festivals are about." Formats: 16 & 35mm. Short subjects accepted. Deadline: April 15 (features); May 15 (shorts). Contact: PO Box 9544, Courtney Place, Wellington, New Zealand.

Correction: Christiane Roget, U.S promoter for the Cartegna Film Festival (see Jan.-Feb. *Independent*), can be reached at (305) 856-1911; telex 820384 BROTHERS, to her attention. The previously published number was incorrect.

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IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION



Courtesy Filmmaker

Three teenagers from Somerville, Massachusetts spend an aimless afternoon in "Vacant Lot," produced by Kate Davis and directed by Ken Selden.



Courtesy Filmmaker

Marjory Hunt and Paul Wagner's "The Stone Carvers" was one of several independent films nominated for an Academy Award in the short subject documentary category.

Mary Guzzy
with Deborah Erickson

From coast to cost there is a rebirth of the "homage" film, in which tried-and-true movie formulas like whodunnit and horror stories are given new life and sometimes new angles by young producers and directors. There's **Blood Simple**, of course. But this is hardly the only recent example; for instance, the Boston Movie Company premiered its 90-minute, black-and-white feature, **Screamplay**, in November 1984, at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art. *Screamplay* assembles a barrage of misfits who are killed off one by one in bizarre ways and honors the B-movie genre that spawned such classics as *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* Produced by Dennis Piana and directed by Rufus Butler Seder, who also plays the naive young murder-movie writer Edgar Allen, *Screamplay* features a star turn by underground movie great George Kuchar as Martin, owner of the grisly Welcome Apartments.

In the works is the San Francisco Tenth Street Production Group's **Dracula's Disciple**, "a vampire film with a twist," scheduled for release in late 1985. Production manager Sandra Van Fleet writes that this first feature by the group will be "cost-conscious" *and* contain "great production values." The film is being directed by Allen Schaaf.

Even as Jeanne Kirkpatrick returns to private life, Marjory and Robert Potts of Vineyard Video Productions have been awarded a $40,240 scriptwriting and research grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a film about Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor under FDR. The producers are looking for footage and stills depicting working conditons, especially for women and children, in New York from 1919–1932, as well as photos and film of sweatshop conditions from 1908–1919. Anyone with such material should contact the Frances Perkins Film Project, Inc., 109 West 77th St., New York, NY 10024; (212) 724-8936.

On the other side of the continent, Lucy Ostrander of Ostrander Productions in Seattle has completed a documentary about one of Frances Perkins's more radical contemporaries. **Witness to Revolution: The Story of Anna Louise Strong**, Ostrander's thesis for Stanford University, is the filmic biography of a Seattle minister's daughter and social worker-turned-partisan reporter who covered every major political revolution of the early twentieth century. In China, where Strong is buried and revered as a heroine, Ostrander obtained rare archival footage from the Peking Archives. *Witness to Revolution* premiered in Seattle in November 1984.

West Coast independents are in the spotlight this month for their unflinching exploration of difficult topics. Los Angeles producer Kirby Dick has released his 58-minute video documentary, **Private Practices: The Story of a Sex Surrogate**, a portrait of two male patients and the female surrogate who works with them to minimize their sexual anxiety. Using a stark visual style, the videomaker avoids sensationalizing the subject matter and reveals more than the physical aspects of intimacy problems.

And Michelle Paymar of Los Angeles has produced **For Our Lives**, a documentary "examining the AIDS crisis and the gay community's response to the disease." The tape is a project of the Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center of Hollywood and the California State Department of Health Services. It is aimed at educational and medical as well as general audiences "interested in learning more about the issues surrounding AIDS." It is available through the Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center.

In other documentary news, New Yorker Norris Chumley's half-hour video portrait, **Little Mike**, was licensed to the Arts and Entertainment Network this past fall. Arts and Entertainment provided postproduction funds for the piece, begun four years ago as a New York University student project. *Little Mike* is the story of Michael Anderson, a three-and-a-half-foot tall technician for the space shuttle's ground support computer system. *Little Mike* had a small budget ($500) and was originally produced with a little industrial Beta I system, but it had a giant commitment from its producer/director, who at various times acted as cameraperson, lighting designer, soundperson, and editor.

Richard Kostelanetz, also of New York, teamed up with West German filmmaker Martin Koerber in 1984 to produce **Ein Verlorenes**

Berlin (A Lost Berlin), a 21-minute film about the Great Jewish Cemetery of Berlin, that has been shown at the Berlin and Oberhausen film festivals. Its soundtrack is composed of testimony by ex-Berliners. Kostelanetz and Koerber also produced **Ett Forlorat Berlin** for Swedish TV, with a new soundtrack of Swedish-speaking ex-Berliners, and they're currently working on versions of the film in English, French, Dutch, Danish, Hebrew, Yiddish and perhaps Portuguese.

Produce director Jack Walworth saw his video satire, **Independents Tonite**, presented in the Whitney Museum's New American Film Series, "Reviewing TV," in December 1984. Written in collaboration with Whit Johnston, *Independents Tonite* depicts several stereotypes of the communications field, from the humorless "political filmmaker" to the seemingly apolitical (and ostensibly amoral) "Hollywood independent," all struggling to change the broadcast television system. Walworth and Johnston pit their independent caricatures against the system, but leave the question of how to change television for "real life" independents to answer.

Can an award-winning dramatic film be shot on a low budget in black-and-white, using non-professional actors? In the case of **Vacant Lot**, a 30-minute piece produced by Kate Davis and directed by Ken Selden, the answer is yes. The film, shot in the working-class town of Somerville, Mass., stars three local teenagers in a largely improvised script about an aimless afternoon in a landscape of misspent youth. *Vacant Lot* won a short film award at the 1984 Chicago Film Festival, and will be shown at the Film Forum in New York City, May 22–May 28.

Several AIVF members received Academy Award nominations this year. Nominations for best documentary feature went to **In the Name of the People** by Pan-American Films and Robert Epstein and Richard Schmiechen's **The Times of Harvey Milk. Code Gray: Ethical Dilemmas in Nursing**, co-produced by the Nursing Ethics Committee and Fanlight Productions, was nominated for best short subject documentary, along with **The Garden of Eden**, by Florentine Films, and **The Stone Carvers**, by Marjory Hunt and Paul Wagner. Michael Sporne's **Dr. DeSoto** was a contender for best animated short.

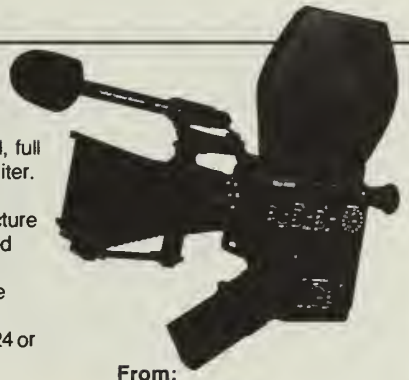
Academy nomination hats were tipped to other independents as well. **El Norte**, by Gregory Nava and Anna Thomas, was nominated for best original screenplay. Martin Bell and Cheryl McCall's **Streetwise** was nominated for best documentary feature, and **Charade**, by Sheridan College, competed for best animated short. Two of the three productions vying for best live action short were independently produced: **Tales of Meeting and Parting**, by the American Film Institute Directing Workshop for Women, and **Up**, by Pyramid Films.

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• *APPRENTICE/ASST. EDITOR:* Worked w/ Jim Klein on award-winning doc for Rhode Island cable, & 16mm narrative short. Will work long hours for low pay. Brown grad. Deirdre Fishel, (212) 662-6936, NY.

• *EXPERIENCED SCRIPTWRITER* of dramatic & comedic stories looking for producer or production company for script development. R. Dubey, (516) 621-6427, NY.

• *EDITOR:* Experienced in 35mm, 16mm, ¾" CMX editing. Interested in working on independent project. Available evenings and weekends. J.T. Currie, (718) 624-8214, NY.

• *AWARD-WINNING FILM/VIDEO CAMERAMAN* w/ 16mm Aaton available. John Bishop, 917 E. Broadway, Haverhill, MA 01830; (617) 372-0458.

• *DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER'S ASSISTANT:* International experience in location scouting, continuity, screening, research, translation. Lend strong support in directing, producing, editing, lighting. Fluent Spanish, Portuguese & French; knowledge of Italian. Mark Christopher, (212) 866-0734 or (212) 819-3372, NY.

• *PRODUCTION ASST:* Professional w/ varied experience seeks freelance film & video work. R. Blanco, (212) 688-9191, NY or (201) 756-0455, NJ.

• *PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/CAMERAMAN* w/ 17 yrs. experience in film, video, TV. Time for assignments while shooting in Europe (mainly Germany) during spring & summer. Documentary, industrial, medical films. Many, PO Box 74, NYC 10025-0074; (212) 662-5364.

• *CINEMATOGRAPHER AVAILABLE* w/Arri 16SR, fast lenses & lights. Fluent French & Spanish. Negotiable rates. Pedro Bonilla, (213) 454-8909. CA.

• *PRODUCERS ASST/ASSOC PRODUCER:* Experience in features, docs, sports, industrials. Credentials available upon request. Peter Hawkins, (212) 316-3880, NY.

• *SAN FRANCISCO GAFFER & GRIP:* Also 2nd unit camera operator. Features, docs, industrials,

commercials. NABET 15. In partnership w/ camerwoman Caris Palm at Sobrante Studios. Reel available. Steve Shriver, (415) 222-7377, (415) 223-8256, CA.

● *ACTRESS FOR VOICEOVER WORK, TRANSLATOR:* Spanish & French. Sample tape of work done for Ministry of Education, Nicaragua. R. Pikser, (212) 222-0865, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER* available w/ CP-16 and Arri 16BL packages, Nagra with mikes, lighting kit, 6-plate editing console, mini-van for camera crew. Special rates for docs. Bilingual English, Italian, some Spanish. Renato Tonelli, (718) 236-0153.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER* w/ new Sony DXC-M3 & broadcast gear ready to shoot news, docs, dance, etc. Full ENG package & crew as needed. Rates negotiable. L. Goodsmith, (212) 989-8156, NY.

● *FILM COMPOSER AVAILABLE:* Experienced. All musical styles. Audio & video cassettes available on request. Tony Slavata, (718) 788-2602, NY.

● *SOUNDMAN* experienced in film & video for features, docs, commercials. Best equipment. Doug, (212) 489-0232.

Opportunities ● Gigs

● *NY STUDIO WANTED* to tape *The Scott and Gary Show,* featuring great bands & great comedy. Cult cable following growing in NY, San Fran, Boston, DC, Maryland, Ohio. Prefer evening & weekend sessions; willing to give you "Recorded at..." credit. Deborah Erickson, (212) 473-3400, days, or Scott Lewis, (718) 339-8145, evenings, NY.

● *INTERNATIONAL/US-JAPAN EXCHANGES* for Media Arts, NEA. Deadline: June 1. NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

● *EDWARD F. ALBEE FOUNDATION* month-long residencies for visual artists. Lodging provided with means a communal responsibility. Applications considered January through April on each year. The Edward F. Albee Foundation, 14 Harrison St., NY 10013; (212) 226-2020.

● *MILLAY COLONY FOR ARTS* has 5 residency openings for visual artists. 600-acre estate in Berkshire mountains; no residence fee; all food & studio space provided. Next deadline May 1. Contact: Ms. A. Lesser, Exec. Dir., Steepletop, Austerlitz, NY 12017; (518) 392-3103.

● *AFI TV WORKSHOP* provides support for writer/producer with fresh approach to television comedy through the McMurray Foundation of Dallas. 3M Corporation sponsors production funds & training & new talent in music-video field. Selected candidates will work with veteran television professionals to develop TV projects at the Sony Video Center on AFI campus. McMurray Foundation deadline: April 10. Contact: John Charnay, Comedy/TV Workshop, Television & Video Services, AFI, PO Box 27999, Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7745.

● *PRODUCER/FUNDRAISER/CO-DIRECTOR* wanted for 1-hour documentary. Some experience necessary but ability & enthusiasm most important. Stone Soup Prods., (212) 757-0499, NY.

● *EDITOR NEEDED* for "Electric Boogie" dance sequence in 16mm documentary. Prefer experience in rock videos or other non-linear montage cutting. Gary Krause, (201) 795-2615, NJ.

● *EXPERIENCED COLLABORATOR* wanted to develop dramatic or comedic scripts. Screenplays also wanted for low budget production. R. Dubey, (516) 621-6427, NY.

● *WRITER* needed to rewrite action detective film script. Producer interested in finding funds; Bill Greaves wants to direct. Work on spec. Contact: Melvin Stephens, (301) 779-1076, MD.

● *WANTED:* Screenplays, books, stories, plays for motion pictures, TV. Professional evaluations by ex-studio story consultants (Orion & Filmways). Qualifying manuscripts offered sales, development deals, referrals to major literary agents. Flaming Rose Prods., 770 Princeton Ave., Metedeconk, NJ 08724; (201) 892-5552.

● *NEW COMMUNITY CINEMA* seeks independent filmmakers for in-person appearances during year-round nightly repertory program. Charlotte Sky or Vic Solznick, New Community Cinema, PO Box 490, Huntington, NY 11743; (516) 423-7610 or (516) 423-7619.

● *WANTED:* Scriptwriter, director/camerman, production crew for commercial feature to be shot in Aug. in New Jersey. Exciting story. Work on spec. Bob, (212) 219-2940, NY.

Resources ● Funds

● *KEYLIGHT PRODUCTIONS* provides complete production services from project development & shooting through editing. Full support staff w/field producers, writers, researchers, PA's. Broadcast location crew available as needed. Beth, (212) 581-9748, NY.

● *MINORITY JOURNALISM FELLOWSHIPS:* 2 fellowships available for minority reporters & producers at Kiplinger Graduate Program in Public Affairs, Ohio State University, for classes beginning Sept. 25, 1985. Candidates will receive MA w/specialization in journalism after 1 year. Tuition & fees waived. Eligible candidates are minority public affairs producers & reporters currently or previously associated with public radio or TV stations or those w/ a commitment to work in public broadcasting. John Wicklein, Kiplinger Professor, Ohio State University, School of Journalism, 242 W. 18th Ave., Columbus, OH 43210.

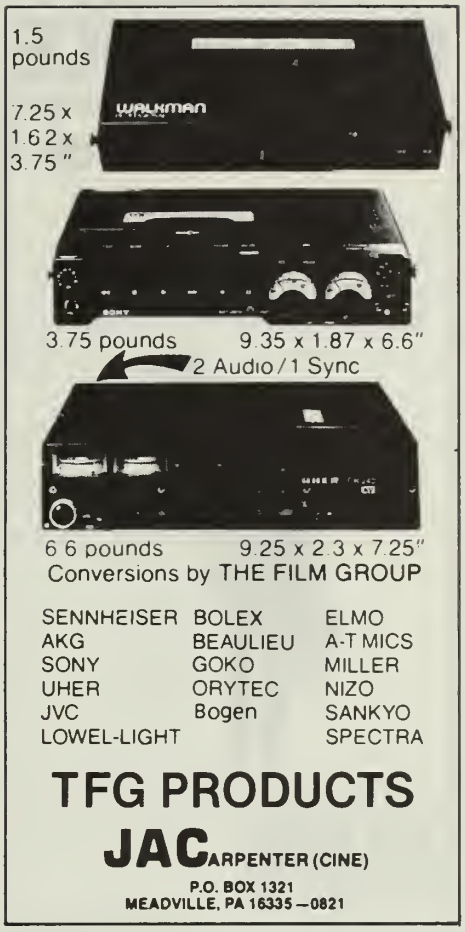
● *OPEN CHANNELS VIDEO FUNDING:* Pilot program supporting outstanding video productions by Cal. artists & independent producers sponsored by the Long Beach Museum of Art. 5 artists will receive $1,000 & use of ¾" production/postproduction equipment for project completion. Projects should be 10-20 mins. in experimental, documentary or narrative style. Submit 1-page typewritten treatment, resume & sample by April 1 to Open Channels, Long Beach Museum of Art, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, CA 90803; or call Connie Fitzsimmons, (213) 439-2119.

● *16MM NEGATIVE MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut at reasonable rates. Bruce Kubert, (212) 228-7352.

● *FREE: ORIGINAL MUSIC* for non-proift productions composed & recorded. Jacob Stern, M-F, 11am-5pm only, (212) 249-3903, NY.

● *PRODUCTION FORMS* for short films & low-budget features. Improve planning, organizing, recordkeeping with this pack of 40 8½"×11" masters. $12.50. Send long SASE for more info & sample. DKE, 1021 W. Mulberry, Dept. 209, San Antonio, TX 78201.

● *FREE LEGAL ADVICE:* Top firm Shearman & Sterling interested in providing certain legal services to community groups working with Community Resource Exchange. No litigation, but will work on



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● *WORK & FAMILY AUDIOVISUAL RESOURCES* listing compiled by Catalyst Audiovisual Center. Includes childcare, parenting, adjustment to divorce, single parenting, working mothers. Kathleen Weir, Media Specialist, Catalyst Library and Audiovisual Center, 14 E. 60th St., NYC 10022; (212) 759-9700.

● *FREE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR DISTRIBUTION* offered by the Film Fund to 12 completed or nearly-completed social issue films. Consulting on choosing distributors, negotiating contracts, developing promotional campaigns. Seeking films in range of lengths, styles, topics. Minority, women, gay & lesbian filmmakers encouraged to apply. Program begins April 1. Send project desciption to: Sam Sills, c/o The Film Fund, 80 E. 11th St., NYC 10003; (212) 475-3720.

● *NATIVE AMERICAN MEDIA ARTIST RESOURCE CENTER* formed in Strawberry Plains, TN (near Knoxville) to work with & train Native Americans in all areas of art & communications technology. The Native American Indian Media Corporation will provide access to professional-quality film production/production equipment at low rates, equipment access grants to socially-conscious media & information & referral services at its Independent Media Artist Resource Center. Contact: NAIM, IMARC, PO Box 59, Strawberry Plains, TN 37871; (615) 933-0606.

● *CPB PROGRAM FUND:* Proposals for development & production of public TV programs. Deadline: April 19. CPB, Program Fund, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

● *RELAX WITH TAX:* Bay Area Lawyers for the Arts publishes *The Art of Deduction: Income Taxation for Performing, Visual Artists,* $6. Bay Area Lawyers for the Arts, Fort Mason Center, Bldg. C. San Francisco, CA 94123; (415) 775-7200.

● *LONG BEACH VIDEO:* Long Beach Museum of Art has published 10-year retrospective catalogue, *Video: A Retrospective, Long Beach Museum of Art, 1974–1984,* w/ essays by former curators David Ross & Kathy Huffman & artist Bill Viola, bibliography, tape listings, $15. Video Program, Long Beach Museum of Art, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, CA 90803, (213) 439-2119.

● *KIND & REASONABLE MOVING COMPANY:* Production assistant w/ van, $175/day. Weekly & hourly rates. Household, airport, commercial. (212) 929-3570, NY.

● *ITALIAN LESSONS:* High school teacher/filmmaker gives lessons, northern dialect. Start now—be there by June. Low rates to filmmakers. (212) 677-3617, NY.

● *PORTABLE CHANNEL MOVES UP:* New renovated location has exhibition, studio, class, conference space, video/film screening, animation suite, video/audio editing w/ narrration booth, 16mm flatbed, Apple PC & printers. Portable Channel, 740 University Ave., Rochester, NY; (716) 442-3886.

Trims ● Glitches

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Ross McElwee (*Backyards*) and Steve Segal (*Futuropolis*) whose films will be part of exchange between Great Britain & the American South, sponsored by IMAGE Film/Video Center of Atlanta & Tyneside Cinema & Festival.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Tony Silver, whose *Style Wars,* produced with Henry Chalfant, won the "Prized Pieces" Award for Best Television Documentary, 1984. "Prized Pieces" is awarded by the National Black Programming Consortium.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Phyllis Ward who received an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award in Broadcast Journalism for her documentary *Baby Boom: The Pig in the Python,* produced at WJZ-TV in Baltimore, Maryland.

CONGRATULATIONS to Kavery Dutta, whose film *First Look* was awarded the Revolucion y Cultura Prize at the 1984 International Latin American Film Festival in Havana, Cuba.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to AIVF members awarded CPB Open Solicitation production funds: Jennifer Fox for *Beirut: The Last Home Movie,* Michelle Parkerson for *Storme: A Life in the Jewel Box,* Ned Schnurmann & Helena Solberg Ladd for *Latin America: The Turning Point* & George T. Nierenberg for *About Tap.*

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to U.S. independent women filmmakers whose work has been selected for the Women's International Film Festival in Creteil: Nina Menkes, *The Great Sadness of Zohara;* Lucy Winer, *Rated X;* Doris Chase, *Table for One,* Jill Godmillow, *Far from Poland;* Nina Rosenblum, *America and Lewis Hine;* Lee Grant, *What Sex Am I?* Greta Schiller, *Before Stonewall;* Molly Burgess, *Miraj;* Lynne Tillman & Sheila McLaughlin, *Committed;* Melvie Arslanan, *Fading;* Julie Dash, *Illusions;* Myra Joy Shannon, *Echo;* Monoma Wali, *Grey Area;* Fronza Woods, *Fannie's Film;* Barbara Hammer, *Bent Time;* & Yvonne Rainer, untitled.

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

AIVF is pleased to annaunce a discount program of film and video production services for its members. The companies listed belaw will offer discounts to AIVF members upon presentation of a membership card. We hope that this program will foster closer cooperatian between independent producers and companies that provide production services.

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New York (212) 678-7989

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AIVF would like thank these companies for participating. Other firms wishing to be included should contact: Andrea Estepa, Membership Coordinator, (212) 473-3400.

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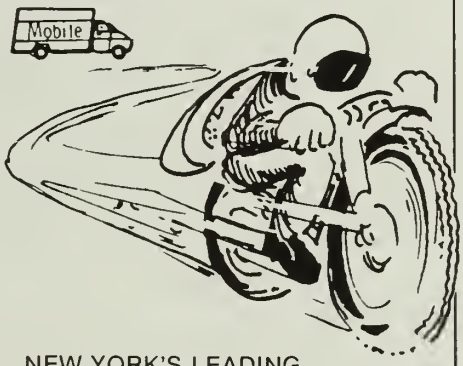
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MARCH 4 6:30
KEN FEINGOLD
To Intensify Use of Time
MARCH 18 6:30
BOB SNYDER
Video Colorization Based on Musical Modules
APRIL 15 6:30
DOUG HALL
Image As Spectacle Video Works
APRIL 29 6:30
LISA STEELE
Talking Tongues
MAY 6 6:30
PAUL RYAN
Ecochannel for the Hudson Estuary
JUNE 3 6:30
DEEDEE HALLECK
In the Belly of the Beast Encountering the Culture Industry on Public Access Cable
JUNE 24 6:30
ED BOWES
Story, Plot, and Central Crises in Television Narrative

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MEMORANDA

FIVF THANKS . . .

Charlotte McKim, New York, NY, for her donation.

Filipino Filmmakers Released

On February 13, President Ferdinand E. Marcos released two Filipino filmmakers, Lino Brocka and Behn Cervantes, and 39 other people arrested for taking part in a demonstration supporting striking transport drivers in January (see "Memoranda," *The Independent,* March 1985). The two filmmakers could have received the death sentence if convicted. All 41 people had been jailed, on Marcos's orders, for 16 days.

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WOMEN LOOK AT WOMEN: FEMINIST FILM STRATEGIES

Tuesday, April 23, 8:00 p.m.
Millennium Film Workshop
66 E. 4th Street
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With Jane Wienstock (***Sigmund Freud's Dora***); Lucy Winer, Claudette Charbonneau, Paula Koenigsberg (***Rated X***); Bette Gordon (***Variety***). Curated and moderated by Joan Jubela.

For more information, call Debra Goldman at FIVF, (212) 473-3400.



Plans for the 10th Anniversary Celebration are in full swing. Mark June 4, 1985 on your calendar. That's the day when AIVF members, supporters and friends will gather to mark this milestone in our history. The presentation of the INDIE Awards and the premiere screening of a compilation tape of members' work will take place at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, followed by a dance at another location. Watch your mailbox for more details.

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THE INDEPENDENT

MAY 1985
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 4

Publisher: Lawrence Sapadin
Editor: Martha Gever
Associate Editors: Susan Linfield
Renee Tajima
Contributing Editors: Robert Aaransan
Bob Brodsky
Debarah Erickson
Debra Goldman
Mary Guzzy
Fentan Johnsan
David Leitner
Tani Treadway
Art Director: Bethany Eden Jacabsan
Advertising: Barbara Spence; Marionette, Inc. (718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBaer 113 E. Center St., Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeezo Typagraphy
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Faundation for Independent Video and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New Yark, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a not-far-profit, tax-exempt educational foundation dedicated ta the pramatian af video and film, and by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc. (AIVF), the national trade assaciatian af independent producers and individuals invalved in independent video and film. Subscriptian is included with membership in AIVF. Together, FIVF and AIVF provide a broad range of educatianal and prafessianal services far independents and the general public. Publication af **The Independent** is made possible in part with public funds fram the New Yark State Cauncil on the Arts and the National Endowment far the Arts, a federal agency.

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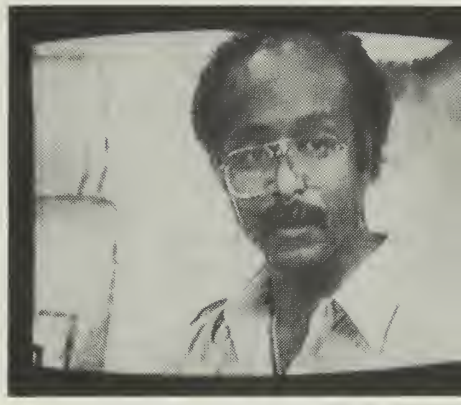
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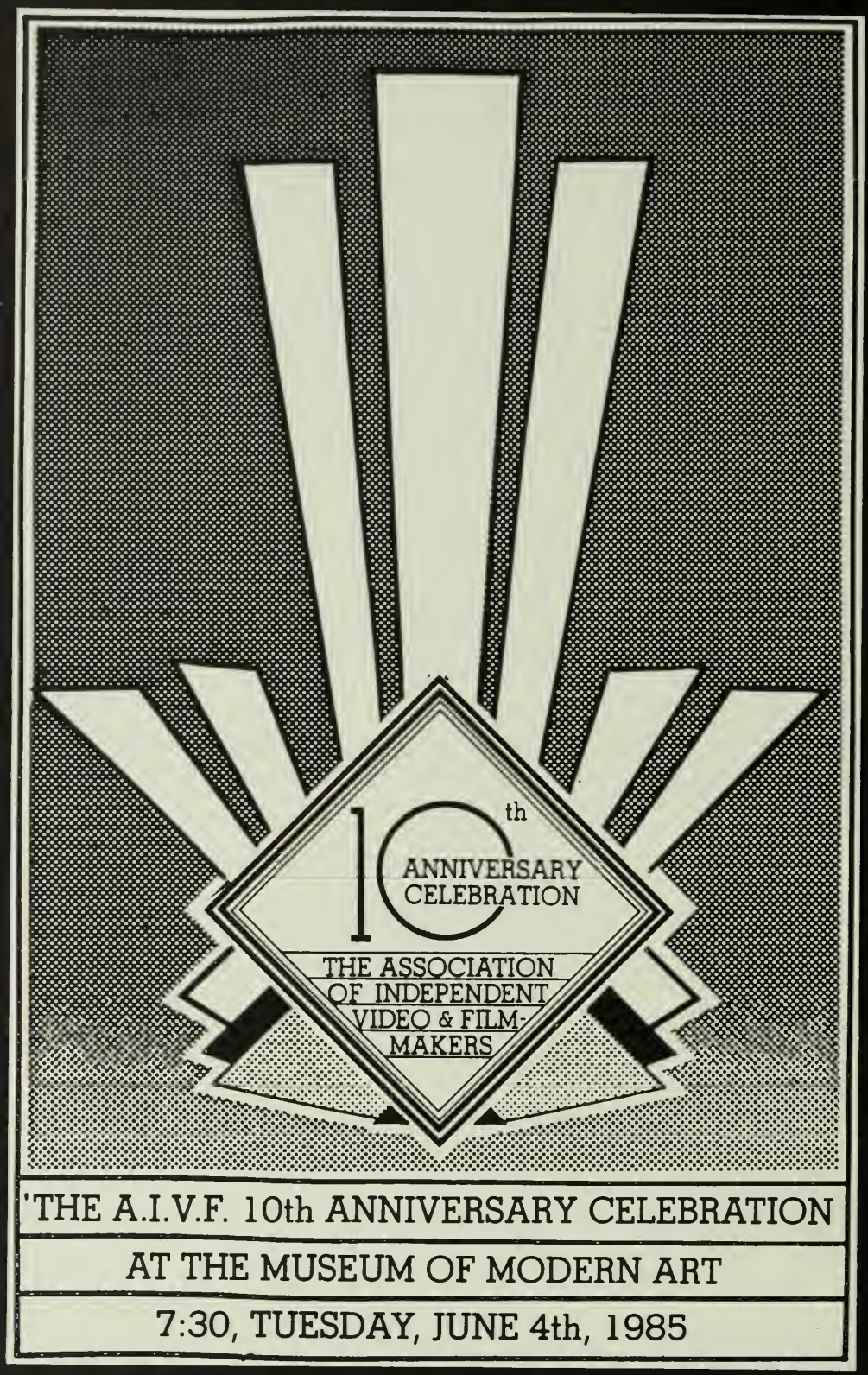
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THE PRICE IS RIGHT: DGA'S NEW LOW-BUDGET CONTRACT

In what one representative called a "landmark" decision, the Directors Guild of America has approved a low-budget contract for theatrical feature films. The DGA now joins the Screen Actors Guild and the Writers Guild of America in bending its standard provisions to accommodate independents and increase union personnel on low-budget films. The contract is, simultaneously, a response to increased non-union production, an attempt to bring new directors into the guild, and a response by the DGA to its current members' desire to work on low-budget films.

"For years, DGA members have pointed out that there are lots of production companies besides Paramount and Columbia," said Lope Yap, Jr., former chair of the San Francisco coordinating committee of the DGA. "The guild used to be very rigid, very arrogant, in upholding the status quo. Now they're listening more to the needs of smaller producers. They're acknowledging that people without $10 million make movies." Bob Bordiga, chair of the DGA low-budget committee, characterized the contract as "an opportunity for independents to be able to work with professional directors. It's long overdue."

The contract grows out of last year's negotiations between the DGA and Cannon Films, the "major-mini" Hollywood production company that churns out more films than some of the established studios—ranging from Andrei Konchalovsky's *Maria's Lovers* to such fare as *Oy Vey* and *Godzilla vs. Cleveland*. (A Cannon spokesperson estimated gross revenues for 1984 at "over $100-million.") Cannon had been on the guild's unfair labor list for refusing to sign a DGA contract. "We didn't want to sign the DGA agreement because we have low-budget and high-budget pictures," said Yoram Globus, Cannon's president. "You can't treat a low-budget like a high-budget picture. And there was a lot of talent that we were using that couldn't get a chance because of the DGA rules." In February 1984, after months of bargaining, the DGA and Cannon signed a low-budget agreement, which became the model for the industry-wide contract the DGA national board has now approved. (At the same time, Cannon and its subsidiary companies also became a signatory to the regular DGA contract, which applies to its higher budget films.)

The new contract covers all theatrical features budgeted at $2½-million or less. (Television films are excluded, and the DGA is currently working on a low-budget contract for experimental films.) For films under $1½-million, the producer will pay all DGA personnel (director, first and second assistant directors, unit production manager) 50 percent of scale upfront, with 60 percent deferred until the producer's gross receipts equal twice its production costs. Films with budgets between $1½-million and $2½-million will pay 60 percent of scale upfront, with 60 percent deferred until the film recoups twice its negative costs. (Under the regular contract, a four-person DGA team costs a $1,500,000 production approximately $10,000 per week; this could be halved under the new contract.)

At the time of the Cannon-DGA agreement, DGA national executive director Michael Franklin told *Variety*, "There is a caveat. Deferment is tied to recoupment and I would have great concern about making the same deal with companies that might not be around when the time comes for recoupment." But Bordiga, speaking of the industry-wide contract, said, "Most films *won't* recoup costs. So DGA people will work for less money. But it makes them affordable to the producers."

The new contract also includes a provision for reduced completion of assignment (severance) pay. It stipulates that severance pay must only be paid after four weeks of work, instead of the usual one, have been completed. And the contract contains what Bordiga called a "terrific audit provision," whereby the production company pays complete audit costs if it is found to owe money.

The union hopes the new contract will reduce the amount of under-the-table work its members do. "Some people call themselves associate producers [a non-DGA position], instead of production managers, and work on non-union low-budget features," Bordiga said. "That's been a practice for a long time."

The spillover effect of the DGA contract on other unions, and on the budgets of studio films, remains to be seen. In February, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees spokesperson Mac St. Johns told *Variety* that IATSE "would not rule out a reasonable agreement [with Cannon]... which would not subvert our International contract." And 20th Century-Fox executive Joe Wizan told *Variety* that the studio might "begin thinking about more low-budget pictures" as a result of the DGA-Cannon pact.

"Maybe *Blood Simple*, shooting for a million dollars in Texas, would have used DGA people if they'd had this contract a year or two ago," said Lope Yap, Jr. Meanwhile, such soon-to-be-released films as Alex Grasshoff's *A Billion for Boris*, with Lee Grant, and Barnett Kellman's *Key Exchange*, with Brooke Adams, have already utilized a revised form of the low-budget contract. —*Susan Linfield*

PRIVATE PARTNERS AND STATION SWAPPING

Despite powerful friends in both houses of Congress, funds for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting are authorized only through 1987—at levels much below those hoped for and expected—and prospects aren't great for 1988-89. Beefed-up membership drives and more aggressive pursuit of corporate underwriters have not made up for the shortfall in federal dollars. With no dramatic increases in federal support in sight, the system is now considering exploitation of two of its remaining resources: its satellite delivery capacity and the broadcasting facilities of its member stations.

The first gambit involves the creation of a wholly owned for-profit subsidiary within the Public Broadcasting System, PBS Enterprises Inc. The impetus behind the incorporation of the new entity is a 10-year agreement signed in February with International MarketNet, a joint venture of IBM and Merrill Lynch. IMNET has agreed to lease four of the 21 lines of the vertical blanking interval (VBI) from the PBS signal to deliver financial data to businesses and consumers.

This business venture adds a new twist to the relationship between these corporate giants and the public system. As program underwriters, both have made their mark on the PBS schedule. IBM had helped bankroll a number of performing arts broadcasts, as well as the foreign affairs series *American Interests*. Merrill Lynch has brought us such alternatives to commercial culture as the *Enterprise* business series and this season's special, *In Search of Excellence*, a paean to the inventiveness of corporate America, complete with helicopter shots of skyscrapers against the heavens and an inspirational musical soundtrack. Now that the two are going into business with PBS, the public television system hopes to make a bundle.

The financial data delivery service is not new, but use of the broadcast signal's VBI—the black band that appears between the rolling image of a badly tuned TV set—is a fairly recent phenomenon. Customers of the established players in the field, Dow Jones and Compuserve, usually hook their computers up to the data source via

telephone lines. While telephone delivery offers the advantage of user response, the telephone companies get a piece of the action, which makes the method fairly costly.

The airwaves, on the other hand, are free. In the IMNET-PBS venture, users will have a decoder, developed by IBM. Subscribers will merely have to tune into their local participating PBS station, flip on the decoder, and the latest stock quotes will appear where Mr. Rogers's face had been a few seconds before. Merrill Lynch will provide the data as well as the initial 20,000 customers in the form of affiliated brokers.

Although IMNET plans on also using telephone lines and other satellite delivery services, the PBS deal, which potentially extends the service's reach to 96 percent of the country, was touted by the company as a great market entry. Equally enthusiastic, according to Neil Mahrer, chief executive officer of PBS's new for-profit offspring, are the member stations who stand to profit. "There's been a great deal of interest from the stations," said Mahrer, who added that PBS will contract individually with each station that decides to participate. Profits from the lease will then be divided between PBS and the stations according to specific formulas. Exercising the prerogative of a private business, Mahrer declined to reveal how much IMNET was paying for the lease, but said the dollars generated would go toward the creation of improved programming.

While PBS and IMNET were sealing their partnership, the Federal Communications Commission began public discussion of its own scheme to put private money into public TV's bank accounts. The vehicle under consideration is station facilities swaps between public VHF stations and commercial UHF stations in the same locality. For the VHF licensee, such swaps could means millions, and the FCC is considering ways to make such transactions easier. Yet in contrast to the apparent eagerness of stations to get into the data business, the prospect of painless facilities is being greeted by many in PTV with greater scepticism. The enthusiasm for swaps thus far seems confined to the FCC, which, led by commissioner James Quello, has begun rulemaking on the issue. Only a few months ago, the FCC expanded the number of television stations a single owner could hold from 7 to 12. In order for this rule change to have its desired effect—giving the "little guys" better programming leverage against the networks—there have to be more stations on the market, for there is no sense in raising the ceiling on ownership if there are no stations to acquire. The Commission's notion is that VHF-UHF swaps are a way in which public television stations can benefit from the hopped-up commercial broadcast market.

In Tampa, Florida, PTV station WEDU/Channel 3 is already considering a swap with a local UHF. In addition to a new space on a different dial, WEDU stands to gain $45-million to $50-million in the deal, which is the difference in market value between the two facilities. The stations have not yet filed with the FCC, however, for according to current rules, such swaps are open to competitive applications. This practice is supported by case law, in particular, the *Ashbacker* decision of 1945, which stated that such transactions be open to third parties. *Ashbacker* now threatens to spoil the FCC's party, for "outside" competition discourages swaps by complicating them, and activates the very bureaucratic machinery that the FCC vowed to contain. So the FCC has called for comments on a proposed change in rulemaking designed to streamline the process in a way that would allow public comment on swaps, but no outside applications. According to preliminary discussion, the FCC would decide whether swaps were in the public interest on a case-by-case basis, with, in commissioner Mimi Dawson's words, heavy reliance on the "local call as to whether or not [the station board] feels they could fulfill their responsibility." The Commission acknowledges that the final decision regarding swap procedure will probably be made in the courts.

Quello claims to be neither for nor against the change. But in order to study its potential, he is considering a revival of the Temporary Commission on Alternative Financing for Public Telecommunications (which, last time out, decided that apart from government support, there wasn't any). The reaction from the public television system was cool. CPB is preparing to oppose the change when the FCC calls for comments. The National Association of Public Television Stations held meetings in March with regional networks and stations to decide its strategy. "From what we have heard so far," reported NAPTS general counsel Barron Futa, "it appears that swaps in local markets would have nationwide negative effects."

Of the nation's 300-plus public television stations, 121 are VHF, and 35 of those are in the top 50 markets. But to swap stations in such influential urban centers, asserted Futa, would contradict the intent of the 1967 Public Telecommunications Act to create a system "reaching all, not some, of the American people." Given the "inferior reach and picture quality of UHF," Futa argued, swaps would seriously diminish PTV's presence in broadcasting, affecting the system's ability to attract federal funds and national corporate underwriting. Particularly chilling was FCC chair Mark Fowler's comment that the reach of the UHF station in the trade need not be absolutely congruent with that of the VHF; he suggested 80 percent as a reasonable figure. Said Futa, "You don't have to be a genius to figure out that if you shrink your coverage in 35 of the top 50 markets by 20 percent, you've lost hundreds of thousands, even millions of your audience."

Futa's concern that the flagship VHFs might jump at the chance to create multi-million dollar endowments for themselves to the detriment of the system as a whole seems well-founded. Despite the negative reaction of national PTV organizations, many individual stations are interested. Financial middlemen that specialize in the communications industry have already gotten into the act, alerting selected stations to the potentials of swaps. KQED in San Francisco turned down a $50-million swap offer last year, but, said president Anthony S. Tiano, the board would reconsider if the price was right. John Jay Iselin, president of New York's WNET, has announced that the station is studying the swap issue; observers speculate that such a transaction could yield $200-million or more.

Iselin did admit that the combination of UHF's weaker signal and the absence of cable in most of New York City could make a swap untenable. Futa, however, disputed using cable as a determining factor. "Cable is not free. We're not in the cable business, we're broadcasters." Besides, he added, public stations only appear on cable courtesy of the must-carry rule. PTV officials would do well to remember that the National Cable Television Association, no slouch as a lobbying force, considers the must-carry rule an albatross around the industry's neck, and would like to see it rescinded. Given the FCC's deregulatory fervor, the must-carry rule offers little security to UHF licensees, public or commercial.

What distressed public TV officials most was the FCC's narrowly legalistic approach to the issue: can the commission get around *Ashbacker*? The issue, countered Futa, is public television's "mission. Swaps go to the very nature of what we are." But both the PBS data delivery business and the VHF-UHF swaps debate indicate that "what public television is" is changing. For the wall which separates noncommercial TV, that erstwhile "public trust," from the private marketplace is increasingly in danger of toppling. —*Debra Goldman*

THE LEARNING CHANNEL'S AGENDA

In April, *Agenda*, the documentary section of the Learning Channel series *The Independents,* debuted on the network's cable system affiliates. Last year, the announcement of the series caused a stir, thanks to the large sums of money poured into the project [see "Media Clips," *The Independent*, January/February, 1984]. The National Endowment for the Arts got the ball rolling with $100,000 in development money; TLC, owned by the not-for-profit Appalachian Community Services Network, put up $250,000; and the John D. and Mary T. MacArthur Foundation gave a whopping $667,000, thought to be the single largest private grant ever awarded to a media project.

That generous budget has been reflected in the acquisition, packaging, and promotion of both *Agenda* and *Dis/Patches*, the film and video art showcase that kicked off the enterprise last fall.



Courtesy TLC

Robert Young went into high gear as the host of "Dis/Patches," part of The Learning Channel's glossy "The Independents" series.

Glossy "call for submissions" posters were sent to almost every media center in the country, and snazzy press kits were distributed to the trade and local press. Producers were paid $210 per minute for their work, which was selected for both series by Gerald O'Grady, executive director of Media Study/Buffalo. Great attention was lavished on packaging the works to make them more comprehensible to the average cable television viewer. In the case of *Dis/Patches*, some felt *too* much attention: the interstitial segments presented by independent producer Robert Young verged on the overproduced and overwritten. No expense has been spared for *Agenda*, either. It features as its host that urbane icon of network journalism, Edwin Newman. The intent is to make *The Independents* what the TLC press releases like to call "the premiere national showcase for independent film and video works."

Robert Shuman, TLC executive vice-president and the company executive in charge of *The Independents*, admits that he was an unlikely candidate to become cable czar of the independent media community. "I don't have a background as an independent producer. I'm a businessman. If four years ago you'd talked to me about independent producers and their problems, I would have said, 'Hey, George Lucas is an independent, and he doesn't have any trouble getting access.' " ACSN–TLC did not seek to become the national cable outlet for independents, either; it was NEA Media Program director Brian O'Doherty who approached the service. But having found himself in that role, Shuman has embraced it. "I want to show that independent media can work as a business. Everyone says the market is out there, but how do you get to it, how do you develop it? I would at least like to provide a model of a workable business strategy."

Shuman says he's well satisfied with the performance of *Dis/Patches*, which is about to begin a second life on public television. The series was not, however, an easy sell. In its first cable run it reached TLC's five million-plus cable homes and one million other households hooked up to unaffiliated systems. But, Shuman notes, "Film and video is an art form that many people are not well prepared for." In TLC's quest for sales to PTV, Shuman found that many station programmers felt "the programs were too narrowly focused." But with an extra push from its promotion and sales staff, TLC has won commitments from a half dozen stations, including Chicago's WTTW and Minneapolis-St. Paul's KTCA. WNET and WNYC in New York and KETC in Los Angeles were among the nine additional stations that have "expressed interest" in the programs, Shuman said. Should all these stations sign up for *Dis/Patches*, the series could reach a broadcast audience of 26 million. And Shuman figures that *Agenda*, which features documentaries on topical subjects like dioxin pollution, wife abuse, and the criminal justice system, should attract a wider audience.

TLC has already begun working on next year's dual series, and, not unexpectedly, art films and tapes are not part of the plan. The first half, tentatively titled *Lifegraphs*, will be devoted to biographical and autobiographical works. By featuring "personal films," a hallmark of independent filmmaking, Shuman hopes to "give the audience an idea of who the independent is." *Coast to Coast*, the second projected series, will return to the documentary form. But rather than focusing on "concerns of the eighties," which is the concept behind *Agenda*, *Coast to Coast* will look "at the last 10 years. We'd like to pick works that have served as a



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catalyst for reflection on important issues of the decade."

Once again, the TLC project will begin with a call for submissions, which in the last round elicited over 1,400 films and tapes. Programming is a task that, Shuman says, "I need to subcontract out." Last year, the TLC project raised a few eyebrows in the independent community when, at the urging of the NEA's O'Doherty, O'Grady was named the single executive producer responsible for selecting works. Shuman expects to handle selection the same way, but may bring in new people. He termed TLC's working relationship with O'Grady very successful, but added, "It helps in certain ways to spread responsibility around. That way you develop contacts with different parts of the community, and also spread the money around. Gerry [O'Grady] represents a segment of the community, but there are other segments, too, and he has helped us become aware of that. I would like to have different curators for each series as opposed to a single curator. But I'm not locked into anything. I don't have my hands tied as to how we administer the effort."

At press time, next year's funding levels were still unknown. The NEA's final decision will be announced this month. The MacArthur board's first 1985 meeting was in March, but their commitment to the continuation of *The Independents* had not been made public. Shuman was, however, optimistic about the attitude of the series' funders toward the project. "They feel that, in terms of what they were asking us to do within a three-way partnership, the effort was a good one."

Independent producers, who survive on a mixture of insane hopefulness and worldly cynicism, cannot help but wonder why TLC is championing work which, outside the access scene, no one else in the cable business will touch. The answer is that the service has nothing to lose. ACSN may be the oldest continuous satellite delivery service in the country, having begun transmitting programming in the early seventies as a quasi-governmental educational project. Yet it remains a small player in the business. In March, Shuman said, TLC's subscriber count had reached six million. While that figure represents a 50 percent increase in subscribers over the last two years, it's small potatoes in terms of both total cable and total television households. TLC's strategy is to create a demand for itself by providing programming that distinguishes it from any other service and by promoting itself to sympathetic and influential institutions within targeted franchises.

TLC is handicapped by its transmission hours: 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. Within these scheduling limits, each segment of *The Independents* has premiered at the ungodly hour of 11 a.m. on Sundays. The thought of sitting down to watch Bill Viola's *Ancient of Days* or Jacki Ochs's *Secret Agent* while taking your first sips of morning coffee is a bit daunting. It certainly does not bode well for audience expansion. To remedy the problem, Shuman reports that TLC is "circulating a prospectus on Wall Street. We're looking for a partner for a for-profit subsidiary that would run 24 hours a day. I wouldn't be pursuing this thing with independents if I thought we'd always have to cut off at 4 p.m. I see independent work as very much a prime time product."

Because *The Independents* is conceived as a business venture, there are undoubtedly built-in limitations to the kinds of work that TLC will want to feature. Yet for the same reason, some independents now find themselves with an unexpected but commited partner in the cable business. It will be instructive to see if this "model for a business strategy" will indeed be as workable as Shuman believes. *—DG*

KQED LICENSE CHALLENGED

After years of persistent appeals, the California Public Broadcasting Forum has won the right to present a challenge to KQED Inc.'s license renewal before the Federal Communications Commission, according to *Current,* the public telecommunications newspaper. The challenge results from a decade of contention between KQED and a group of citizen watchdogs who claim that the public broadcaster has deviated from its community service mandate.

The main actors in the conflict are KQED Inc., which operates KQED-TV (Channel 9), KQEC-TV (Channel 32), and KQED-FM, all in San Francisco, in addition to CPBF, a coalition composed of the Committee to Save KQED, the NAACP Western Region, the Bay Area Bilingual Educational League, and members and contributors to the station. At the center of the maelstrom is KQEC-Channel 32, the broadcaster's "second channel," which airs over UHF. In 1971, KQEC was donated to KQED by Metromedia. But for the next three years, KQED kept the channel dark, claiming lack of operating money. In the meantime, some community activists lobbied to turn Channel 32 into a community-run alternative to KQED, which the station management resisted.

In 1974, sparked by a CPBF-member suit, the FCC ordered KQED to put KQEC back on the air, despite its claims of poverty. The commission stipulated that if financial problems were the only reason for discontinuing broadcasts, KQED should relinquish its license. Channel 32 went back on the air, basically as a repeater station for KQED programming, operating during prime time.

But for the first five months of 1980, KQEC went dark again—which set off CPBF's license challenge. KQED told the FCC that KQEC went off the air to replace faulty switching equipment. CPBF does not dispute this, but it claims that the real reason behind the shutdown was to save money.

When the commission refused to hold hearings on KQED's license renewals for both 1977 and 1980 (there is a three to four-year lag time in license renewals), CPBF brought suit against the FCC before the U.S. District Court of Appeals. CPBF alleged that KQED misrepresented itself to the FCC regarding the KQEC deactivation, that KQED had not complied with the open meeting and financial disclosure provisions in the Public Broadcasting Act, and that the station's income-producing activities were interfering with the production of local programming. Larry Hall, a CPBF leader, has charged that KQED has lost money and diverted management attention to the city magazine *San Francisco Focus* and other commercial ventures. But the station claims it has been successful in these schemes.

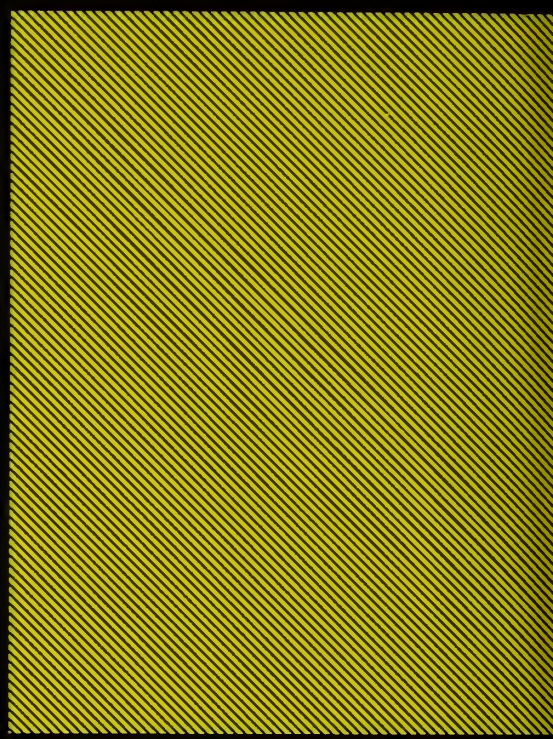
Two of the three appeals court judges agreed that an evidentiary hearing would be appropriate on the question of KQED's representation of the 1980 KQEC deactivation, but dismissed the other charges. Based on the FCC's past performance, the hearing probably won't happen soon.

Hall claims that CPBF is not trying to get KQED's license revoked, but, rather, wants to badger the broadcaster into greater public accountability. What will happen to KQEC? Perhaps a more appropriate question is, what *can* happen to the channel? New York City responded to budget restraints by leasing commercial time on WNYC, its municipally-owned public television station. On the other end of the spectrum, the license to Philadelphia's Channel 35 was picked up last year by a group of primarily minority, community broadcasting producers who will schedule independent and community-oriented programming. In the Bay Area, the Minority Television Project has petitioned to run its programming during the hours KQEC is off-air, and has even filed against KQED to take over KQEC's license. After a number of appeals and counterappeals, the MTP request is still pending. *—Renee Tajima*

STATIONS' RIGHTS VS. CPB

In media politics, localism is a double-edged sword that can work both for and against alternative voices. In cable, local control exercised by franchising authorities has been key to the creation and funding of access channels open to community and independent producers. In public television, however, independents have rarely been able to develop productive relationships with local licensees. Such licensees are held by government authorities, universities, and communities. In the first two cases, political pressures and institutional prerogatives shape programming priorities, while community station boards usually consist of pillar-of-the-community types with a stake in the status quo.


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Station staffs, too, are subject to membership pressures, public television's version of ratings consciousness. Few licensees are willing to take the political or aesthetic risks that programming which originates outside the system involves. Instead, the dollars that reach independents have traditionally come out of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's pocket. Thus, when public television licensees raise the flag of localism, independents worry about whether their tiny share of public programming money is in jeopardy.

Late last year, the board of the Rocky Mountain Corporation for Public Broadcasting (RMCPB) resolved to push for Congressional legislation that will make the individual licensees, and not CPB, the direct recipient of federal public broadcasting funds. At present, the stations receive approximately 50 percent of such funds, passed through CPB in the form of Community Service Grants. Radio and the Program Fund each get almost a 25 percent share, and the Corporation pays administrative and other constant costs with the remaining 10 percent. RMCPB, which serves New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Montana, Arizona, Wyoming, and Idaho, wants to eliminate the CPB middleman so that, together, public television and radio licensees will get 95 percent of the pie.

The move revives an effort first mounted by RMCPB in 1981, when the Reagan administration succeeded in slashing CPB appropriations, alarming the system and its supporters. In such an atmosphere, Congressional friends of public television chided RMCPB lobbyists for attacking CPB when it was down. Four years later, RMCPB believes its proposal will no longer be considered a crackpot ploy, and, ironically, continued limits on government support for the system is one of the group's central arguments.

"In a time of limited funding," said RMCPB executive director E.W. Bundy, "it is vital that the money be used in the most efficient way possible. The fact remains that the only people legally responsible for what appears on public television are the local licensees. Local boards, who live in the community, are the best judges of what is of value to that community." But do these boards in fact represent *all* of these communities? One wonders, for instance, how many Latinos and Native Americans are on the boards of RMCPB's member stations, and how many of their interests are reflected in local programming. gramming.

When asked if RMCPB was motivated by dissatisfaction with programming now developed at the national level, Bundy replied, "Dissatisfaction is too strong a word. It is not a matter of everything being wrong now, but that things could be better. My personal belief is that most licensees feel that there must be developmental production at the national level. This is not to suggest that there should be no national program fund. Under our plan, there might be a very similiar staff, perhaps even the same staff. But there would be a definite difference in terms of including licensees' concerns in the process."

The precedents for RMCPB's approach are the several proposals being considered for public radio. In February, the board of National Public Radio adopted resolutions calling for all federal money to be channeled directly to licensees. NPR would then set a membership fee for those stations which wanted to receive its programming, based on membership revenues for each station as well as a separate distribution fee. Likewise, Bundy envisions television stations kicking back a portion of their dramatically enlarged community service grants to a national programming fund—the critical psychological and political difference being that a CPB-administered fund would in effect be spending the stations' money rather than its own.

RMCPB is willing to bide its time on the proposal. Although, following the board resolution, the group held discussions with key telecommunications staffers on Capitol Hill, Bundy did not yet have a strong sense of legislators' reactions. At press time, authorization hearings, the first step in the funding procedure, had not yet begun, and, Bundy said, "Authorization hearings may not be the proper time to introduce this issue. Perhaps it should be taken up during the appropriations process, and it might not come up this year at all. We're going to leave that decision to Congress."

If RMCPB's proposal makes any headway, it will be interesting to see how the recent Program Fund policy of giving four seats on the Open Solicitation to station representatives figures in the debate. In the past, Program Fund director Ron Hull has defended the quota as a means to better serve the needs of the system's "consumers"—the stations. As a gesture of goodwill toward the licensees, the move could forestall some criticism of CPB. But some observers believe the strategy could backfire. For if giving the stations a major say in how Open Solicitation funds are spent is such a good idea, why not turn all programming dollars over to them, as RMCPB wants? CPB may argue that only a nationally representative panel, free from the pressures of the station environment and utilizing the resources of "outside experts" as stated in the 1978 public telecommunications act, can fulfill the larger mission of public television. If so, the station representative quota has already weakened the credibility of that approach. —*DG*

INDEPENDENT INPUT

The majority of the 21 American works selected for screening at the International Public Television Screening Conference (INPUT), held in Marseilles, France last month, were independent productions. An international selection team, chaired by Mike Fentiman of the BBC and Ser-

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Photo Kira Perov

From Bill Viola's "Anthem," shown at INPUT.

gio Borelli of Radiotelevisione Italiana, chose 87 television programs from around the world for their innovation, originality, courageousness, experimentation, controversy, and excellence in the use of new technology. Selections included *Anthem* (Bill Viola), *American Survival* (Jon Alpert and DCTV), *Before Stonewall: The Making of a Gay and Lesbian Community* (Greta Schiller), *Bless Their Little Hearts* (Billy Woodberry), *The Departure* (Emiko Omori), *Knee Dancing* (Doreen Ross), *Koyaanisquatsi* (Godfrey Reggio), *Nisei Soldier* (Loni Ding), *A Reporter from Grenada* (Harry Minetree), *Seeing Red* (Julia Reichart and James Klein), *The Times of Harvey Milk* (Robert Epstein and Richard Schmiechen), *TV Commercials for Artists: 30 Second Spots* (The Kitchen), and *Voyage of Dreams* (Collis Davis and Raymond Cajuste). All of the programs had been offered to or aired on public television. Ironically, despite international recognition, several of these independent productions have had a hard time getting national airings on PBS. *—RT*

SHUFFLE AT THE WALKER

Film and video programs at the Minneapolis-based Walker Art Center are in for some reorganization when staffers Melinda Ward and Richard Peterson leave their posts this summer. Ward, director of the Media Program, will become full-time executive producer of the new series, "Live from Off-Center," being produced at KTCA-TV, the Minneapolis-public television affiliate. The series of eight half-hour programs fuse television with the performing arts and include the work of several independent video and film artists. According to Ward, the series was first conceived at the Walker in 1982 and 1983, when ABC Cable approached the museum about developing arts programming for the network. The Walker's Media Program, which was established as a result, continued to conceptualize "Live from Off Center," even though ABC eventually pulled out. (The program also produces arts education programs.) The extent of Walker's further involvement in the KTCA series has not yet been determined.

Ward will not be replaced, and the Media Program will probably be moved to the museum's education department. But the museum plans to replace film/video curator Richard Peterson, and to continue programming film and video works. *—RT*

DINNER AT EIGHT

Toni Treadway

Eight millimeter gatherings have a tribal nature: they are usually intimate, in someone's home, with only five or six people. Eight millimeter history grew out of home movies, the hearth, the family gathered, the cooking smells, the presence of ancestors, the re-creation of story-telling at the fire that has gone on and on for generations.

Last February, on Chambers Street at the tip of Manhattan, Fred Barney Taylor cooked spaghetti carbonara for the filmmakers assembled in his loft. There were five of us: Maria Marewski, Jeff Preiss, Yasunori Yamamoto, Taylor, and me. After the spaghetti and wine, a couch was dragged into the big room. Taylor set up a stepladder behind it and put the projector on the paint rest: the white wall over the dining table served as the screen.

Had I visited on the first Sunday of the month, the film gathering would have been at Yasunori Yamamoto's home, where for three years, he has cooked for people—sometimes six, sometimes 26—who bring their movies. Yamamoto makes diary films in Super-8. He has compiled more than 50 400-foot reels in the several years during which he has shot every day. He shyly points out that Super-8 affords this amount of production, for its eight-dollar-a-roll cost allows you to always have a roll in the camera. (His output must be approaching that of the French filmmaker Joseph Morder, whose retrospectives at festivals in Montreal or Brussels can be fascinating or tedious, depending on what part of his autobiography he is screening.) Yamamoto employs a variety of styles and techniques, from direct documenting of some Sunday film gatherings to cine-painting the textures of walls in Manhattan.

Yamamoto's cine-painting reminds me of the first images I ever saw by Millennium's Howard Guttenplan: vibrant color/texture compositions of the East Village. Yamamoto studied at the Chicago Art Institute after "various coincidences" led him there from Japan, before he came to New York. Yamamoto also showed us a roll shot by his sister in Japan: scenes of their parents on their mountainside farm. The filming was a firmly centered documentation of a simpler way of life, a good example of a phenomenon in Super-8 that we call "postcards."

Taylor showed several three-minute (one roll) postcards from filmmaker friends in different countries, include a devastating roll of Luis Lupone walking through the burnt remains of the Mexican Cinemateca. When Taylor sends a postcard film overseas he includes a roll of new film for the recipient. (The International Federation of Super 8 Cinema has been encouraging this exchange, noting that Super-8 movies avoid the problems of different video standards. The federation has also lobbied nations to allow the importation of Super-8 film at lower tariffs.)

Following a break for mint tea or coffee, Maria Marewski screened *Scoptophilia.* Intricacies in the clotheslines in a courtyard, a loving caress of images of laundry in the breeze: feminine gesture. Marewski also has an acquisitive ear, taking in the ambience surrounding her images and embroidering them with poetic reflections. We talked about recent film literature on "the gaze." characterized "the (feminine) gaze."

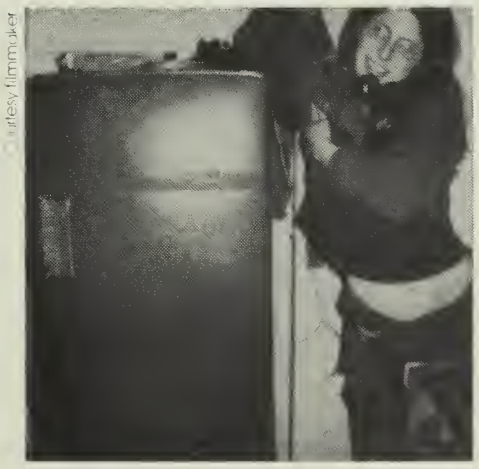
Jeff Preiss shoots regular 8 (rather than Super-8) because "it's beautiful and my lens is so sharp." He let us fondle his old Bolex with its 5.5mm lens, an art object in itself. Jeff's Kodachrome movies were almost more than the little 8mm frame could hold. *Pre-Spring Stop at the Foxhole, Part II* was the most erotic film I have seen in years, a loving eye and all the heady, sweet things of the season when all our hormones come out of hibernation. Extreme, crisp close-up images of a woman's bare shoulder, spring smock, and beads, as the light of a sunny afternoon plays through the trees and car windshield. Personal footage without any of the devices or denigrations of pornography. I'm reminded of what keeps me going in 8mm: the images open up my senses.

Fred Barney Taylor, the man who brought us together for this evening, showed us a work-in-progress, tentatively titled *The Architecture of Rhythm,* which will combine cultural images from both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Dominican sugar cane workers fill the screen dancing at a religious celebration, and Taylor follows one person's face for a very long time. The scene will be optically slowed down to broaden its effect.

This same technique worked with great power in Taylor and Kimberly Safford's film *Los Hijos de Sandino* ("The Children of Sandino"), filmed in Nicaragua on the first anniversary of the revolution. Better described as social poetry than travelogue, *Los Hijos* has been successfully blown up to 16mm. It was created on Millennium's optical printer, a technique which Jeff Preiss is also exploring in his *Foxhole* series. Taylor is captivated by issues of culture, both in his art and in the film class he teaches. His massive *Lives of the Artists* celebrates the ethnic diversity of New York through portraits of 13 artists in their neighborhoods.

Taylor is developing a strong personal style that infuses his filmmaking, his cooking and his household. His place in Tribeca has hosted a parade of more than 150 students in the last two years, many of them internationals, but all people who want to learn more about filmmaking and the access that Super-8 technology provides. Taylor recalled one class in which he was the only North American amidst filmmakers from four continents.

Taylor's Tuesday film workshop brought together 10 filmmakers from Italy, Switzerland,





Courtesy filmmaker

Jeff Preiss shot "Lo & Yo" (left) and "Pre-Spring Stop at the Foxhole, Part II" (right) in regular 8mm.

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Brazil, and metro New York. The class is working on a joint project documenting Manhattan. It seemed the few rules were to shoot at 24 fps and to let the shots run long, so the class is editing material with scenes averaging one minute in length. The cut I saw was about one hour long. Jumping around the city minute by minute, each scene was so visually interesting and rich in ambient sound that I found myself accepting the film's structure on its own terms. Taylor projected the footage at 18 fps, modifying the typical Manhattan pace and lowering the pitch of the audio. One remarkable sequence of a frisbee dancer was filmed in close-up, with incredibly agile shooting of twists, turns, and throws.

Jonas Mekas, in *Movie Journal,* describes the kind of artist who chooses 8mm film: they make their own movies without institutional support, without grants from the New York State Council on the Arts or the National Endowment for the Arts, often without even applying for grants at all, and without many screening or distribution opportunities. In 8mm, it's make your own film, show your own film, feed your audience, and be free of the aesthetic and financial worries that plague other independents. At 16mm gatherings I've been to, conversations tend toward funders, grant deadlines, or distribution. I have heard it eloquently argued that the 8mm filmmaker's freedom from these worries leads to greater artistic freedom. I think this is an overly simplistic view, but I notice that at 8mm gatherings, we talk about religions, mythology, cameras, travel, and food. Small groups of people meet all over the country with 8mm films. Avant-garde films, black-and-white narratives, music videos, political documentaries with footage smuggled from hotspots overseas, people who like to talk about old equipment—8mm takes all kinds.

Until the 1930s, 16mm was the amateur film gauge. When Kodak introduced 8mm in 1932, a schism occurred between the 16mm and 8mm people. This year's merger of the Metropolitan Motion Picture Club and the New York 8mm Club will finally try to heal that split. Michael Tomasso of the NY 8mm Club says there are about 30 members in each group, some amateurs, some professionals. They make documentaries, personal films, narratives, and travelogues. Tomasso still owns the camera his dad brought home when he was a kid, a Fairchild Cine-phonic: "Regular 8 with sound, a hot item in 1962!" He adds, "Don't second guess the club. Just show up."

The Metropolitan Motion Picture Club and the New York 8mm Club meet jointly on the third Tuesday of every month at the Summit Hotel, Lexington Ave. at 51st St., New York City, at 7:30. Meetings are free and open to the public; if you join, dues are $15 per year. They try to program a variety of film styles.

Toni Treadway is the co-author, with Bob Brodsky, of Super 8 in the Video Age, *available in English and Spanish.* © Toni Treadway 1985

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IT LOOKS GREAT, BUT WILL IT WORK? TESTING SUPER-8 CAMERAS

Bob Brodsky

There are more than a few reasons for doing a check on the operating condition of the Super-8 camera you're going to use next week, whether for play or work. The subject is important, or the film opportunity is unique, or you're finally in the best mood to make your film. And film and processing are expensive.

You may have just purchased a new camera. The cameras of recent years are designed to close tolerances, so you need to find out if yours can function within those tolerances, and if not, have it repaired under warranty. More likely, you've rented or borrowed a camera, bought a used one, or, as a film teacher, had a closet full of junk laid on you, and you have to sort out the good and passable from the bad before your students tell you it's all junk. If you fail to check out an unfamiliar camera before using it, you have less than a fifty-fifty chance of obtaining acceptable results. But where do you begin a meaningful check?

•

I have a fancy sound camera with comfortable earphones which I forget to take off when I put my camera down. As a result I've dragged the camera all over New England, off park benches, and once down a flight of stairs—it has a few scars. Look for scars of abuse, broken switches and dials, dented lens mounts, film chamber doors that are bent or missing screws. Note them, that's all. They may mean nothing. I've never seen a well-maintained professional camera that didn't look like it had seen combat duty. My fancy camera works perfectly.

Examine the film chamber door latch. Does it close securely? Now look at the film path. Does it show signs of wear? Never mind the accumulated crud; you can easily clean it out. But burred screw slots in the film path are more alarming. They can be buffed smooth with very fine emery paper. If there is a sound recording head, note how worn it appears to be. Most sound cameras can have their heads replaced by whomever is doing factory service. Prices range from $50 to $150. File this fact; it's a bargaining point if you're bargain hunting.

Look into the battery compartment. If it contains moldy batteries, you've got a problem. You have to clean up this mess before you can test the camera. Begin by scraping out the debris. Neutralize any remaining battery chemicals by wiping the compartment with baking soda solution. Now brighten up the battery contacts with a few strokes of the fine side of an emery board or some fine black abrasive paper. Make sure you clean all the grit out of the compartment and allow it to dry before putting in new batteries.

Install alkaline batteries in the camera, unless it has its own power supply (in which case make sure it has been freshly charged). Alkaline batteries can be purchased for as little as 38 cents from battery wholesalers (such as Wagon Photo in Chelsea, Mass.). Install the batteries correctly and let the camera run without film for a minute or two. This will begin to remove the humps from the rubber drive belts.

If you have the time to wait for processing, purchase a Kodak home cartridge for your test; otherwise, buy 7244 from a nearby Super-8 lab that will give you one-day or faster service. Many cities that lack such labs are on express bus lines into ones that do. Arrangements can be made with the lab for a fast turnaround. Plus-X stock can also be used for testing silent cameras. If you're testing a Fujica Single-8 camera, prepare to wait a week or 10 days for company processing. So if there's testing in your future, lay in a little stock now.

Here's what you're going to test: *image:* sharpness and steadiness; *exposure system:* accuracy and personality; *sound recording* (if applicable): distortion and modulation.

IMAGE TESTING

While none of the above is a major operation, each step requires attention. Image testing involves the lens and film transport. Begin by cleaning both. Clean the lens with a genuine lens cleaner, not eyeglass cleaner. Use only lens cleaning tissues (never eyeglass wipes) to spread the solution in gentle swirling strokes. It takes only a few months in today's atmosphere to lay a coating of dust on an exposed lens. Clean the eyepiece, too.

Clean the film path, including the sound recording head, with alcohol or, better, Johnson's Lemon Pledge furniture wax, on a cotton swab. Don't allow either solution far inside the film gate because in some cameras there's an orange gelatin filter hidden inside. Just clean the edges of the gate. Wipe it all clean with a dry swab and blow away the remaining cotten fibers.

Now set the diopter adjustment of the eyepiece to your own vision. Failure to do this has produced more bad Super-8 footage than any camera malfunction. If the viewfinder range has a circle with a line through the middle, adjust the eyepiece until the etching is sharpest to your eye. This is most easily done by pointing the camera at either the sky or another clear bright area, such as a light lampshade (keep the lens unfocused). If the camera lacks the divided circle, adjust the diopter until you see the grain of the groundglass focusing screen (again with the lens unfocused while pointed toward a bright area) or, lacking a groundglass screen (as in the simplest cameras), adjust the diopter until the image is sharpest (with the lens set for its widest angle of view).

Determining the relative sharpness of a Super-8 camera involves filming in a frame-wide pattern, such as is found on much wallpaper. Put film in the camera, put the camera on a tripod or other stable support, and if you have a choice, set the camera to run at 18 fps. Zoom all the way in and focus carefully on the edges of the pattern. Pick a location where you can adjust the lighting. Film 10 seconds in light strong enough to indicate an aperture of about f/4. Then decrease the light until the camera indicates a wide open aperture and film another 10 seconds. This



There's nothing like rococo wallpaper for testing edge-to-lens definition on a new camera acquisition. The white card helps judge the steadiness of the image.

Photo: Bob Brodsky

tests the practical maximum sharpness of the lens.

Now prepare to test the accuracy of the back-focus, which is the point at which the light rays converge on the film. Convergence is most critical at wide apertures on short focal length, so zoom all the way out to the shortest focal length. (If you need to move the camera to get a frame-wide pattern, be sure to refocus by zooming in.) Now repeat the two 10-second filmings, one with illumination allowing an auto-exposure of about f/4, the other with the light diminished to force the aperture wide open.

When you eventually screen the results of the above tests, the zoomed-in results will appear sharper than the wide angle results, and the f/4 results will probably appear sharper than the wide-open results. But if the wide angle results are really a mess compared to the zoomed-in footage, the camera has a back-focus maladjustment and needs factory service. Be sure to send in the test footage, or you may get the camera back COD but unrepaired.

Steadiness of registration for Super-8 cameras is easily tested by filming a white card across the bottom half of the image. Film at both 18 and 24 fps, if possible, for 10 seconds each. When you project the results, raise the frameline onto the screen and observe any jitter between the white part of the image and the scene below it. This method of testing enables you to distinguish between camera unsteadiness and projection unsteadiness. A small amount of jitter in each is common.

EXPOSURE SYSTEM TESTING

The exposure metering in Super-8 cameras is usually connected to the diaphragm blades. Film a bright scene with a wide range of mixed brightness levels. Keep the light behind you. Ten seconds at 18 fps will be sufficient. When you review the scene in a darkened screening room, get a sense of how the exposure meter deals with the range. More light objects in the frame, including sky, will darken the other objects, and vice versa. There are no standards, but the resulting images should be well-exposed, considering the proportion of lights to darks.

Auto-exposure systems have personalities. Some are skittish, altering exposure at the slightest shift in light entering the lens. Some are so sensitive that they will change exposure when light reflects toward the lens from the windshield of a passing car that never even gets into the frame. Such systems create more problems. Other auto-exposure systems, particularly the ones that do not meter the light through the lens, adjust more slowly. When tracking from a light area into a dark one, these systems very gradually increase the exposure. Somewhere in-between these two kinds of systems is preferable. It's possible to outwit these two types of systems somewhat; however, you must first know the tendencies of the particular auto-system.

To test the peculiarities of an auto-exposure system, film while panning from a light to dark area and back. Do it quickly; do it slowly. If there is a back-light control, try that, too, on both front-lit and back-lit subjects. Don't shoot a lot of film; you can accomplish all of this in 15 seconds, again at 18 fps. If there is a +1 switch, don't use it in this test; it will only confuse your results.

SOUND RECORDING TESTING

Sound Super-8 cameras require two simple tests: one for distortion and another for modulation indication. You will need a trusted microphone. If there is no such instrument, buy one of the new Radio Shack $12.95 lavaliers and get acquainted with it by plugging it into a cassette recorder or deck. This is a wide-range mic. With a few exceptions—the Canon 1014XL-S dynamic omnidirectional mic and the mics supplied with the Nizo Integral and 6080 sound cameras—don't use the mic supplied by the camera. In all cases you will need a microphone extension cord to get the mic away from the camera running noise. (For Nizo Integrals order a mic adapter kit from Super-8 Sound.)

With the camera on a tripod, stand about 10 feet in front of the camera; while speaking (with the mic about 18 inches from your mouth), expose 20 seconds of film at 18 fps. If the camera has a high and low level recording switch, use both. If it has a manual level, make a 40 percent level test. Make sure you conduct these tests completely protected from any wind.

Most sound Super-8 cameras can deal with extremely loud sounds only over an extended time, and even then they will distort. They do not have limiters. So it pays to know what the viewfinder indicators tell you when sound is being optimally recorded. Some of them hardly indicate at all, while others put on a real light show or peg their meter needles to the wall. Recently I tested two new cameras and eventually found them more than adequate. However, initial tests (following the instruction manual) failed to produce acceptable results. The lesson seems to be to test over a range of the camera's controls and note how each setting is indicated in the viewfinder so you can obtain the same results under varying circumstances. You can consider your sound test a success if the screened footage has natural voice sounds and is free from distortion on one or more of the settings.

Remember, Super-8 cameras, unlike professional ones, are consumer items. They are intended to be thrown out when they wear out. Luckily, many were made to last, some can be repaired, and, with a modicum of care, will function for years. In fact, there are thousands of fine cameras being resurrected around the world, and a few of the best ones are still in production.

Bob Brodsky is co-author, with Toni Treadway, of Super 8 in the Video Age.

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Illustration by Lauren-Glenn Davitian

Lauren-Glenn Davitian

Welcome to the Information Age! Experts tell us that the microchip is the most significant innovation since the printing press, and that advanced electronics will democratize the production and distribution of information. But we still find Americans who cannot read and communities without adequate library services. Literacy and education, two mainstays of democracy, are not enhanced by technological innovations, but, rather, by political and economic policies that ensure access to technology and information. Specifically, access depends on decisions made by large communications providers (telephone companies, multi-system cable operators, computer manufacturers), regulatory agencies (the Federal Communications Commission, state agencies, local utility boards), legislators, and media advocacy groups—each with some stake in public opinion and the public interest. And for the public there is a lot at stake: those who cannot fully participate in the Information Age may not get an adequate education, make a living wage, or even afford to be entertained.

Information has become a commodity like food, fuel, or gold. Profits are made not by serving the most diverse telephone, television, or electronic system users, but by cultivating mass markets in densely populated areas. Information economics encourages communications firms to overlook obscure markets: the poor who live in what the Census Bureau calls "metropolitan" areas and the approximately 28 percent of U.S. residents in rural communities. Ghettoized by location and income, neither Harlem businesses nor Vermont farmers qualify as desirable consumers. Consequently, such groups remain underserved by information industries: the range and quality of services they receive suffers, and they pay more for the services they do obtain.

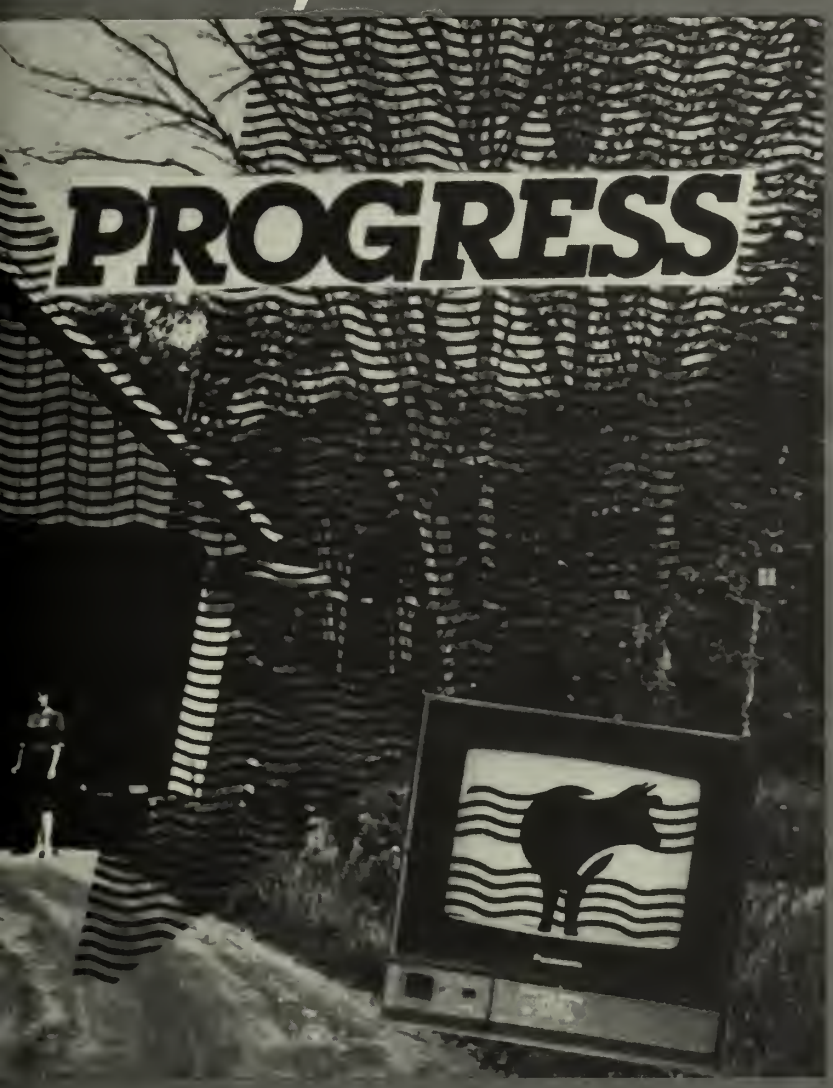
Any initiative to provide up-to-date telecommunications for the underprivileged is based on the principle that every citizen should have access to information. In keeping with provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1934, media advocates and some legislators have tried to ensure universal telephone service, equal time responses to broadcast programs, public access to cable TV, and competitive pricing for electronic services and components. Now, concessions gained from commercial communications industries are threatened by deregulation and budget cuts at the federal level. Without public safeguards, the boundaries maintained by large communications providers will be tightly drawn around the metropolitan areas that generate the highest profits. Representative Timothy Wirth (D.-Colorado) explains this process, in light of the recent AT&T breakup and deregulation:

> The 50-year effort to bring affordable and universally available telephone service to the public has served the nation well. Universal telephone service has contributed to the nation's economic, social and political integration and development. Each telephone subscriber receives a more valuable service when anyone else in the country can be called. Universal service is threatened by significant rate increases that will impact especially hard upon the poor, elderly, handicapped and those living in high-cost urban and rural areas.
> (*Congressional Record,* July 21, 1983)

Deregulation is not the only threat to equitable distribution of information resources. Many states in the U.S. have not yet entered the Information Age. State legislators and development agencies realize the need to modernize telecommunications infrastructures before they can attract high-tech industries and related businesses. More high-tech industry, however, does not guarantee wide diffusion of information. Communities with the greatest need for jobs, improved services, and a stable tax base are least able to pay the price of modernization—and, therefore, cannot partake in the benefits of improved communications.

One prominent promise of the Information Age is the decentralization of information production and consumption, but technology will not decentralize itself. As independent producers, we are especially attuned to the problems of information access. We understand that information—like fair housing, racial and gender

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equality, and foreign policy, for example—entails economic, political, and social decisions. We are interested in equal access to communications and, through our work, attempt to give others a voice, offer alternative points of view, and teach people to be critical. Because information and communication are our materials, we can play an important role in advising underserved people to speak for themselves. And since the deregulated market emphasizes the role of consumers, the informed and outspoken buyer may be able to influence the shape and development of communications in his or her community.

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Vermont is second smallest, thirty-sixth lowest in per capita income, and one of the most rural states in the country: half a million citizens, 66 percent living outside urban areas. Vermont might seem a classic example of a state where telephone, cable, and other communications services have been hopelessly backward. But it is not. A tradition of local decisionmaking has enabled local entrepreneurs and cooperatives to provide Vermonters with communications networks for nearly 100 years.

Some of the earliest telephone companies were founded in Vermont, and there were more than 150 companies in the state prior to consolidation in the 1930s by New England Telephone and Continental. Operated "for the convenience of the stockholders," the first companies served between four and a few hundred subscribers. Today, nine telephone companies connect in Vermont; the largest, New England Tel, serves 85 percent of the state. Cable television was originally introduced by rural entrepreneurs in search of markets for their television sets. Vermont was one of the first states to acquire clear reception via cable in 1952. Like the early telephone industry, giant multiple-system companies had not yet been conceived. Even today, only six of the state's 40 cable companies have been acquired by major out-of-state multiple-system operators.

Vermont has managed to wire itself despite the absence of large communications companies during formative times, but there has been no significant improvement in telephone or cable service in the past 30 years. Only 10 percent of the state is equipped for digital telephone capability (preventing access to alternative long distance service such as MCI or SPRINT), most cable companies still provide 12 channels of programming, and there is not one satellite uplink in the entire state. "When the operator thanks you for calling AT&T," quips Vermont Public Service Board chair Louise McCarren, "remind her you don't have a choice."

Until now, Vermont's economic prospects rested on the "three-legged stool" of tourism, agriculture, and manufacturing. Tourism and agriculture give the state its rural character, but tourism generates only 14 percent of the gross state product, and agriculture a mere five percent. In fact, Vermont *imports* 90 percent of its food. In Vermont development circles, there has been an enduring ambivalence between preserving the rural "quality of life" and building a firm tax base. Now, however, the question, according to University of Vermont president Lattie Coor, "is no longer *whether* development will occur, but *how*."

Given Vermont's economic woes, the advent of the Information Age offers some hope and requires some careful planning. McCarren points out, "Vermont's economic outlook is uniquely sensitive and dependent upon the ability to attract industry which is compatible with its environment. To attract this kind of industry, which is generally believed to be high-tech, clean industry, it is going to be necessary, if not critical, for the state to have in place a modern telecommunications system that provides the communications needs of the new industries we seek to attract." After all, in the past decade other New England states have reversed cycles of slow growth and unemployment by courting new, information-based industries. Why not redress Vermont's 100 years of zero growth with the promise of high technology? Massachusetts and New Hampshire have most successfully capitalized on what Lynne Brown of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston describes as:

- the region's history of industrialization, pool of skilled labor and entrepreneurial talent;
- the plethora of universities and colleges

serving as a source of technological innovation and professional and technical manpower;

- the availability of venture capital in the Northeast (52.3 percent of all venture capital funds in America are in the Northeast);
- the fact that high technology has not had to compete with other industries for manpower or financing.

Brown concludes that "the most important element behind the development of high technology in New England is hardest to influence by public policy—the spirit of enterprise."

A recent issue of *High Technology* (January 1985) focuses on states' effort to attract information-based industry, outlining a set of necessary conditions similar to those cited by Brown. Based on these criteria, Vermont's greatest potential for Information Age prosperity lies in in its most economically developed area in the northwest corner of the state, at the junction of the Winooski River and Lake Champlain.

While the rest of the state endured 100 years of no growth and a steady exodus of people, Chittenden County flourished as the historic seat of commerce and industry. As a nineteenth-century lumber kingdom, and later a center for textile production, the county has, with foresight and entrepreneurial skill, forged its way into the high technology era as the sixteenth most affluent county in the U.S.

The closing of the cotton and woolen mills in the mid-1950s left 50 percent of the county's workforce unemployed. The efforts of the Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation, established to create jobs and resurrect the region's prosperity, successfully appealed to IBM and General Electric to locate the state's largest plants there. Twenty-five percent of Vermont's population now lives in Chittenden County, and their labor provides 30 percent of state revenues. Significantly, 13 percent of the entire Vermont working population is employed in high-tech industry—the third highest percentage in the country. The majority of these workers can be found in Chittenden County. Given this track record, further development of high-tech industry is likely to occur in Chittenden County. New England Tel's plans to upgrade telephone service and Cox Cable's 54-channel, interactive system will serve the growing needs of commerce and leisure, making the region even more attractive.

As a first step toward creating interest in new technologies and laying the groundwork for a telecommunications and development policy, lieutenant governor Peter Smith and UVM's Lattie Coor convened Vermont planners, bankers, industrialists, regulators, and legislators at the Vermont Telecommunications Seminar last October. Communications experts from IBM, AT&T, New England Tel, and Harvard neatly outlined the Information Age for participants, who, for the most part, had never considered the implications of telephone/computer interfaces, satellite uplinks, teletext services, two-way cable service, or fiber optic telephone networks. Assured that Vermont's decisionmakers would make a commitment to technological development, NET vice-president Bailey Geislin announced plans to invest $50-million to wire the state's urban corridor (Burlington, Rutland, Montpelier) with fiber optics by 1987 and expand digital capability throughout the state by 1990.

Developments such as Cox Cable's plans to upgrade its three largest territories from 12 to 54 channels with interactive capacity and public access facilities, or the growth of telephone "interconnect" companies (alternatives to regional Bell operating companies), will improve the state's information choices and help attract new business. However, the parade of sophisticated technology that so impressed the presentors and audience at the telecommunications seminar will continue to concentrate the production and distribution of information in the state's most populated areas. While fostering growth, state legislators and developers should suspend their enthusiasm for the panacea of the Information Revolution long enough to consider that their plans to build a tax base favor urban areas and large corporations.

Issues of affordable, up-to-date telephone and cable service will ultimately be resolved by the Vermont Public Service Board. As a regulatory agency, the PSB must guarantee ratepayers services they can afford while allowing communications companies a fair rate of return. The effect of deregulation on the PSB's regulatory power has not yet been determined; the board will soon rule on cable television (which will clarify their role in rate-making and franchise renewal) and continues to negotiate with large and small utilities in the public's interest. In the course of arbitration, small businesses and noncommercial interests must insist on the kind of service they need—and the rates they are willing to pay. Given the chance to articulate their needs, small communities should make sure they get a chance to plug into the networks of information distribution and thus participate in economic expansion. Access advocates must go further, making sure that production and distribution resources become available to all sectors of the Vermont population. Can existing public information networks—cable TV, public TV and radio, libraries—be improved at reasonable costs? How do we incorporate new technologies—computers, satellite dishes, VCRs—into community life? What are effective strategies for decentralizing and sharing information in Vermont? What would a one-room schoolhouse do with a satellite uplink? Does a town of 1,000 need a 54-channel interactive cable system? The question is not simply money, but appropriate technology.

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Although public telecommunications policy in the Information Age often means industrial policy—a region's attempt to cultivate economic growth—well-planned, innovative communications systems can also help revive community functions threatened by an unchecked quest for profits. And already existing public information networks can provide a foundation for future activity. For example, public television in Vermont, though modest, offers some public affairs programming geared to a regional audience. The state's sole public TV station, Vermont ETV (based in Chittenden County), covers statewide issues on a series of news magazines, interview programs, and the ever-popular call-in shows. One regular two-way program, *Hot Line,* gives public figures like the governor and the Vermont congressional delegation a chance to speak with constituents in a public forum. The mainstay of ETV's daytime schedule is educational programming at all levels. And, recently, the system has produced local programs with potential national appeal.

Despite awareness of public responsibility, Vermont ETV remains a *broadcaster.* Because

of its centralized location and budget limitations, production concentrates on general topics in predictable formats. Since funding continues to be jeopardized, public TV may never be able to address the varied interests of many segments of the Vermont population.

With interactive cable on the horizon and cable systems in place, cable TV becomes an eminently appropriate medium for local communications. Charlie Larkin, an analyst for the Vermont Department of Public Service, claims that the state's cable TV systems will be upgraded in the next five years. Larkin admits that the cost for service will increase accordingly, and some subscribers may not be able to afford cable, but he foresees an eventual decrease in rates for basic service—reception of broadcast channels, and in most cases, public access—as cable operators add a greater variety of pay and special programming. Michael Billingsley, a member of Onion River TV in Montpelier and an early advocate of media access in Vermont, envisions New England Tel's fiber optic network as a potential link for public access centers across the state. With similar technological enthusiasm, Bob McGill, new owner of the Burlington-Rutland-Montpelier cable TV franchise (formerly a Cox Cable system), believes that his smaller Vermont-owned company can successfully initiate two-way banking, electronic shopping, and electric load management for subscribers. In these cases, access to information may bring the previously underserved into the mainstream, but technological solutions need to be matched with innovations that encourage self-sufficiency and attend to specific community interests.

In 1979, the Supreme Court ruled against FCC provisions ensuring public access channels, equipment, and five minutes of unrestricted free time to private individuals, but the Cable Deregulation Act of 1984 allows franchising authorities (the PSB in Vermont, for instance) the right to require prospective cable owners to allocate and support access channels. Statewide, full-scale access is not mandated, however, and public awareness of access possibilities remains vague; therefore, public education is the necessary first step toward obtaining practical, effective access centers. Such efforts are not unknown in Vermont, one of the first states to boast public access facilities. Many of these early projects floundered, however, because eager community media organizers failed to hand equipment over to local residents. When producers relocated in cities where they could find work, they took their expertise.

Now, the most successful projects, and a basis for future access activities, can be found in high schools. For instance, Bellows Falls students produce a daily news program, an informed and well-produced alternative to the network affiliates' news. The state's largest public access center is Brattleboro Community Television, reaching 4,600 subscribers; Warner-Amex endowed the center with equipment in the late 1970s, and the center now programs several hours a day. But their $14,000 yearly operating budget must be subsidized by production of local commercials and underwriting for video projects. Cox Cable plans to build three major access centers in Vermont's largest cities—Burlington, Rutland, and Montpelier—that may serve as an important base for other access producers. Two years of discussions have preceded the studios' openings; meanwhile, programming by nonprofits, independents, and high shool groups is under way in these communities.

Electronic media alone will not bring Vermont into the Information Age. Michael Bowman of the Vermont Council on the Humanities and Public Issues regards advanced technology as a means to diffuse educational resources to all areas, urban and rural. The council's speakers bureau and book discussion series have been its most successful projects in remote communities—so successful that other states have initiated similar programs. There are also model programs for public access TV or distribution via videocassettes—the groundwork for alternative media in Vermont.

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Clearly, Vermont legislators, regulators, educators, and industrialists are keen to chart a course for the state's telecommunications futures. Under the auspices of the statehouse and with the assistance of major communications firms, UVM and Vermont Technical College have drafted a proposal for a research grant to examine how the state can attract and generate new business without sacrificing public communications needs. Perry Johnson, policy analyst for UVM, outlines five areas being studied: appropriate technology for Vermont (not just the "gee whiz" stuff); funding for telecommunications development (a state authority to issue bonds?); governing structures for development (public, private, or a combination of both?); methods for ascertaining the needs of sophisticated users and those with basic access needs; and, finally, ways to encourage citizens to understand and use new technologies and networks. The approach and tenor of the proposal is encouraging news for all Vermonters. And Vermont independent producers and media advocates can play an important role in the development and application of a statewide communications policy, creating programs that describe how new technologies benefit local users, and working with interested local groups. Together, we can design affordable, accessible communications services and negotiate with decisionmakers. Our experience with access and familiarity with information sources will aid any effort to build cable access facilities, community computer networks, and closed-circuit program distribution. In this task—public education—we are not very different from the independent producers John Grierson addressed in the 1940s.

> In one matter, we are very particular: we do not believe in the general public quite so naively as the salesmen and the advertisers seem to do. We see the so-called general public as divided up into a thousand and one publics of specialized interests: people interested and active in rural libraries, rural community halls and rural planning; people interested in the active and actual achievement of higher standards of nutrition and child welfare and public health; people actually and actively interested in town planning and regional planning. . . . These must inevitably be the growing points of an activist system of education.
> (*Grierson on Documentary,* edited by Forsyth Hardy, 1946, Faber & Faber)

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BLACKS IN THE MAS

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Nolan A. Bowie

Participants at "Blacks and the Mass Media," an Aspen Institute conference held in Aspen, Colorado in August, 1984, met to discuss the failure of the mass media to both portray and employ blacks fully or fairly. The conference urged that the media take strenuous affirmative action efforts to overcome decades of employment discrimination, and that the entertainment industry broaden the range of character portrayals open to black performers. It supported tactics ranging from friendly persuasion to demonstrations and boycotts in order to change the media.

Twenty-nine people, 13 of whom were black, participated in the conference (a complete list of attendees is appended), which was chaired by Michael J. O'Neill, former editor the New York Daily News. Below is an excerpt from the conference report, reprinted with permission of the Aspen Institute and the author. Full copies of the report can be obtained from the Aspen Institute, One Lincoln Plaza, New York, NY 10023.

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After five intense, three-hour discussion sessions based on evidence drawn from news articles, scholarly reports, books, and professional journals, the participants concluded that the greatest structural barrier to fair treatment of blacks in the mass media is the widespread failure to correct historical discrimination. The underemployment of blacks is worst in the most important and influential positions—owners, managers, publishers, editors, correspondents, producers, directors, lead players, scriptwriters, and other creative and professional roles.

In the last few years, the share of jobs held by blacks in the broadcast industry has actually declined—from nine percent in 1981 and 1982 to 8.9 percent in 1983. The conference charged the Federal Communications Commission with non-enforcement of the equal opportunity obligations that the Commission itself had laid down for broadcasters. It was also argued that the current move to "deregulate" broadcasting has undermined the advances blacks were making under the previous effects of rules relating to ownership, employment, and community-responsive programming.

The picture is no better in cable television where, in 1982, blacks held only 3,982, or 7.6 percent of 52,464 jobs, not counting headquarters personnel. Only three percent of the officers and managers at the local level were black, and, at headquarters, only 4.7 percent.

In the movie industry, from the third quarter of 1981 to the second quarter of 1983, blacks represented 11.8 percent of the 53,980 actors holding membership in the Screen Actors Guild, yet they account for only 8.8 percent of all lead players and logged only 5.9 percent of all the time worked by SAG members.

Daily newspapers in the United States employed some 50,000 people as reporters, copy editors, photographers, artists, and news executives in 1983, but only 2,800 (5.6 percent) were members of racial minorities (as compared with 20 percent in the general population). In that year, 97 percent of all newspaper news executives were white. Moreover, 60 percent of the nation's daily newspapers employed no minority journalists at all.

The mass media are as much powerful molders of beliefs, images, and myths as they are vehicles for presenting facts and other information. They constitute the crucial distribution system of messages to and among members of the American public. They help to shape opinion on political, social, and cultural affairs, and, not least, attitudes toward minorities, of whom the white majority may have little first-hand knowledge.

The mass media are also businesses, driven by profit incentives, and increasingly, the forces of large-scale corporate enterprise. Although blacks represent a $163-billion-a-year consumer market, they are generally not addressed as a commercially desirable audience.

So-called "general audience programming" on television is synonymous with "white audience programming" created by, about, and primarily for whites between the ages of 18 and 49 with above-average incomes. Even specials about blacks are more often than not the product of whites who, though well-intentioned, still reflect the racial isolation of the larger society.

As has been true historically, the images and portrayals of blacks in non-news contexts still tend toward stereotypes. Blacks appearing in entertainment programming on television, for example, are cast almost always as singers, dancers, musicians, athletes, victims or victimizers, and back-up law enforcers. Working class blacks in other occupations are seldom seen, but *poor* blacks *are* shown, and poor black women are depicted all too often as "big mamas"—fat, unattractive, servile in status if not in behavior.

News coverage of blacks is mostly limited to three areas: sports, crime, and civil rights. Television rarely presents black experts or commentators, not even on matters of special interest to blacks but especially not on topics of wider interest. Only two blacks currently have syndicated newspaper columns. Across all daily newspapers in the country, only 30 or so blacks are employed as editorial writers.

The obstacles to black ownership of mass media, whether in broadcasting, cable television, newspapers, or other channels, are great and growing greater: prohibitive entry costs, discrimination by advertisers, scarcity of available outlets, and, in broadcasting, the abandonment of rules that were designed to prevent excessive ownership concentration and to encourage the entry of minority owners.

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Author Nolan A. Bowie in a recent "Paper Tiger TV" public access cable program.

Blacks currently own less than two percent of licensed and operating radio and television stations. Of the more than 10,000 stations, some 90 black companies own around 160, and 40 to 50 of those companies are in financial straits because of high debt service and the difficulty of maintaining an adequate advertising base. Spectrum scarcity is still a profound obstacle to black ownership of commercial television stations: there are no unused television channels left in the top 25 markets and only a few vacant VHF channels in the top 100 markets (the areas where most blacks live). The price of existing VHF television stations is almost everywhere out of reach: in 1983, KHOU-TV in Houston was sold for $342-million!

Ultimately, the barriers to black employment and ownership in mass media affect the style and content of the messages printed and transmitted—a point made repeatedly by Reverend Jesse Jackson during the brief and historic period when he had ready access to the mass media as a candidate in the Democratic presidential primaries. While the American media may be the "best in the world," in Jackson's words, they persistently fail to assess the significance of black voters, who have been "underpolled, underestimated and undercounted."

Since 1978, the FCC and Congress have actively pursued the "deregulation" of broadcasting rules and laws deemed obsolete because of changes in telecommunications technology and the media marketplace. Proponents of deregulation have argued that the present Communications Act and its public-interest standard no longer serve a useful purpose and may actually inhibit programming diversity. Opponents have argued that "deregulation" is a code word for the strengthening of corporate rights and privileges at the expense of the public.

In any event, blacks have not been helped by the elimination of rules that once required broadcasters to ascertain the needs and interests of the black community (as well as other significant groups) and to provide responsive programming. Nor have blacks (or other listeners and viewers) benefited from the move to relieve broadcasters of the requirement to air a reasonable amount of non-entertainment—news and public affairs—programming. Citizen challenges to broadcast licensees have been made more difficult, too, since broadcasters were freed of their former obligation to keep logs on the programs they aired: the public and the FCC itself have been robbed of a useful tool for holding broadcasters accountable to the public interest. Because of deregulation, commercial radio licensees need only file an application the size of a postcard once every seven years to gain renewal.

Now the FCC and some members of Congress have proposed doing away with the Fairness Doctrine besides. That further step at deregulation would remove the longstanding requirement that broadcasters must deal with issues of public importance and must provide on-the-air opportunities or the expression of contrasting views on those issues. Without the Fairness Doctrine (and its associated "personal attack" rules), blacks and others will lack a crucial measure of leverage in insisting that broadcasters present a wide variety of views.

For those losses, there will be small compensations for blacks in the new and emerging technologies (low power TV, direct broadcast satellites, home videocassettes, etc.). Those channels are being left to market forces, and the market forces dictate specialized services to narrow, upscale audience targets. The new media will be, if anything, even more irrelevant and inaccessible to blacks than the old.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Employment

The participants in the Aspen Institute conference recommended that mass media organizations voluntarily adopt effective and verifiable affirmative action programs, to include:

- Putting black employees onto the "fast track," or into accelerated skills development or training programs, leading to editorial and other decision-making positions affecting media content, hiring, promotions, personnel assignments, marketing sales;
- Training managers and editors to be more sensitive to the nexus between employment policy and media content, particularly the danger of negative portrayals and racist stereotyping originating from a work force composed and directed almost entirely by white males;
- Recognizing that effective equal employment opportunity policies and practices are simply good business;
- Linking their managers' bonuses and advancement opportunities to their success in meeting minority hiring and promotion goals;
- Assigning blacks to a greater diversity of roles, responsibilities and situations.

The conference also urged blacks themselves to monitor, vigilantly and systematically, the employment practices of mass media companies and to bring sufficient and appropriate measures against any media employer that unlawfully discriminates against blacks or fails to make reasonable progress toward righting imbalances in its work force.

Special appeal was made to the FCC to enforce, vigorously and effectively, its own EEO rules and regulations, recognizing that any "zone of reasonableness" measuring the record of a broadcaster in hiring and promoting blacks should presume movement toward achieving at least the same proportion of blacks in the top four job categories as exists in the available work force in the vicinity.

Organizing, Networking, and Coalition-Building

Blacks should continue to form alliances or coalitions with Hispanic-American, women's, and other media access or advocacy groups, as well as with the more traditional civil rights organizations, churches, and labor unions. Their joint aim should be to broaden legitimate public participation in the media and to create a greater awareness of media empowerment via access to channels of distribution and publication, fair employment and opportunities for ownership.

All-out efforts must be made to convince the average citizen, white as well as black, of the seriousness of the problem—that the mass media are still giving minorities short shrift, that everyone suffers from this imbalance, and that those in the responsible positions must be required to take constructive action.

Leaders of the such national groups as the Congressional Black Caucus, the NAACP, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., the National Association of Black Journalists, the National Black Media Coalition, the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ, Sigma Delta Chi, black sororities and fraternities, the National Bar Association, the National Council of Black Lawyers, and the American Civil Liberties Union should meet to review the problems, to assess the requirements of a properly effective national information and telecommunications policy, and to formulate a manifesto for positive change and measure progress. These groups should move issues of media policy and practice into their top agenda items, treating them with no less importance than their established concerns with civil rights, education, housing, and jobs.

Media outlets should themselves be used to educate people on their rights to file petitions to deny license renewals to broadcasters whose service to their community is inadequate or unfair, to take part in FCC rulemaking and other proceedings, and to play a role in local cable franchising—or other matters of state and city telecommunications policy.

Letter-writing campaigns should be initiated and directed to the three commercial networks, local television and radio stations, cable companies, and newspapers, whenever calling attention to a specific portrayal, program, or an article can exemplify the general problem. Blacks in particular should express their opinions in the media, including the black press, about signs of racism, negative or unrealistic portrayals, and inadequate coverage. They should be no less vocal in praising good work when it appears.

Parents, especially black parents, should teach their children how to watch television and to read newspapers critically. Many adults must learn these skills themselves. For the public, the problems and issues of media power must be demystifted.

Government Regulation and Legislation

It is crucial that black citizens attempt to influence legislation and rule-making at local, state, and federal levels, since politics, rather than courtrooms, will be the arena for change in the future. The black community must therefore become informed about pending matters before local cable franchising authorities, state cable regulators, the FCC, and Congress.

Blacks should be aware of the implications and negative consquences that deregulation may have for their already limited opportunities for broadcast employment, ownership, and access to the airwaves. Blacks should put their support not only behind retaining certain existing public interest requirements of broadcasters, like the Fairness Doctrine, but also extending those requirements to the new and emerging media technologies.

Demonstrations, Dialogue, Negotiations, Lawsuits and Boycotts

Mass media owners and executives must be made aware of the continuing and prevalent racism, whether intentional or unconscious, in their industry. They must take the intiative to share media power with blacks and other minorities by integration of their staff and talent ranks: by fair and balanced portrayals; and by accepting responsibility for their part in the outcome. If they choose not to pursue what is fair, reasonable and lawful, blacks—alone and with the assistance of allies—will inevitably exert pressure.

Frederick Douglass, the abolitionist, ex-slave, first black diplomat of the United States and first black to publish newspapers in the United States (*The North Star* and *Frederick Douglass's Paper,* 1845–1860), said, "Power concedes nothing without demands." Indeed, pressure from blacks in the struggle for equal rights in other areas has proved effective in bringing about positive change. It is unwise to assume that such pressure will be any the less necessary with the mass media.

Dialogue, negotiation, and other non-litigious avenues should always be tried first in resolving problems between blacks and mass media organizations. But when those efforts fail, blacks and others should resort, as appropriate, to lawsuits, economic boycotts, and public campaigns or demonstrations. Organized pressure may properly be directed against any media organization or institution that fails to live up to fair and reasonable standards—from schools of film and journalism to national television and radio networks, from cable television multiple-system owners to the local operating unit, from radio and television stations to local newspapers and national chains, from advertisers and rating services to production studios, unions, and talent agencies. Consideration should also be given to bringing writs of mandamus against government agencies, such as the FCC, to compel them to act in accord with their statutory obligations.

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3-D SOUND

RECORDING, MIXING, EDITING

Douglas Smith

There has been a lot of discussion lately about the advent of stereo sound for television and theatrical film releases. What is stereo and what are some of the practical and aesthetic considerations in recording, editing, and mixing it? This article will review the preparation for a Dolby stereo mix of a theatrical release feature-length documentary, *Stripper,* and outline some of the problems, choices, and costs facing an independent producer should he or she decide to release a film in stereo.

Stripper was not a low-budget documentary. [For an analysis of stereo sound for low-budget documentaries, see John Bishop, "Sweet Stereo Sounds," *The Independent*, May 1984.] In fact, it used the best available technology to arrive at a "big picture" look and sound. Conceived as a 35mm theatrical release, it was shot in Super-16mm for the sake of flexibility, and its Nagra-recorded sound was transferred to 16mm stock. Only the final cut would be blown up to 35mm. Though technically a documentary, *Stripper*'s producers realized that its marketability depended partly on the film's sound quality. Since many scenes are performance sequences, with music a salient aspect of the structure, a best-quality Dolby stereo mix was decided upon.

What is stereo and what is Dolby? Simply stated, stereo is the recreation of the ear's perception of three-dimensional space by using two sound tracks. In film, this means the recreation of a sound perspective to match or strengthen the illusion of three-dimensional space on screen. Dolby, when referring to a Dolby stereo mix, does not mean the noise reduction system familiar to record owners or sound transfer people. A Dolby mix records four channels according to speaker assignment (left, center, right, and surround speakers), then encodes them for a two-track optical release print which, when projected in a theater, is then decoded back to the four-channel speaker assignments. The upshot: a sound system created specifically for movie theater audiences that goes beyond the usual two-channel systems, literally enveloping an audience and recreating the illusion of three-dimensional space to match the images on screen.

Stereo film sound is achieved through mixing various elements, some of which are best recorded in mono and some in stereo. The location recordist often has to make a decision on the spot as to the most effective method of recording. As Andy Aaron, who recorded sound effects for *Stripper* and to whom I am indebted for most of this discussion on recording, explains, sounds can generally be classified into two types. Point source sounds, such as a door closing, hammer hitting, clock ticking, or individual person speaking, should usually be recorded in mono. At the mix, the mixer can then assign a specific speaker position (or pan from one to another) that will convey the placement of that point on the screen. Multi-source sounds, such as lobby atmospheres, forest presences, car interiors, or crowds, should be recorded in stereo so as to fully capture the spatial dimensions of the scene. As there are many sources of the sound, each ear would receive different information; stereo recording reproduces this texture. Some mixes try to reproduce spatial dimension by using two mono recordings of an atmosphere, so that each ear hears something subtly different. This "fake" stereo can work, but in no way does it catch the full vibrancy and dimensionality of a scene originally recorded in stereo.

The techniques of stereo recording for films vary, but there is one general rule usually followed: co-incident microphone placement. Two mics, one for each channel, are placed within one inch and at 90 degrees from each other. The angle difference recreates a perspective shift in sound similar to that heard by two ears. The proximity of the two mics combats phrasing and ensures mono-compatibility. All stereo sounds must be able to be played in mono without distortions due to frequencies canceling each other. If two mics are several feet apart, various frequencies may be boosted or reduced and the mono version will be distorted—for example, a deep, bassy sound may suddenly become very thin. Phasing is not heard by the location recordist listening through his stereo headphones; the co-incident miking technique ensures a proper recording capturing full spatial dimensions while retaining mono-compatibility.

Other kinds of two-track recordings may be brought back from the field on a stereo Nagra, but shouldn't be confused with stereo. For example, in the *Stripper* performance sequences, one mic was placed near speakers to get a good music recording while another was placed in the crowd to get clear crowd reactions. This type of recording is very useful in getting the cleanest recording of whatever type of sound you're going



for, but does not capture the spatial dimensions of the area on screen (it may capture a very different feeling dimension), and thus is not true stereo. Another example is simply the use of each track to record a specific voice as two people converse. The sound recordist here is attempting to get the cleanest sound possible for each of his mics, not attempting to get stereo. In these situations, on *Stripper*, each channel was transferred to a separate 16mm mono track, and whichever sound was best for the picture was selected. As most of the sound was recorded either in mono or two-track mono, stereo was never an issue during the picture editing. The ¼" tapes of effects and ambiences recorded in stereo were catalogued and set aside for the sound editing.

Once the final editing of the picture was close to satisfaction, Bernie Hajdenberg was contracted to organize and supervise the sound completion through the final mix, with Dick Goldberg and I working as sound editors under his supervision. Since extensive picture recutting and tinkering was expected during the sound editing, a systematic approach had to be designed to accommodate many changes.

There were three practical alternatives for organizing the sound editing:

1) *Cut in 16mm stereo tracks.* The problem with this is the limited number of two-track 16mm heads available, especially on dubbers at mixing studios, although with the increasing demand for stereo, this situation is changing. (Sound One, a New York mixing studio, now has four 16mm stereo dubbers available.)

2) *Cut in 16mm mono, then use a synchronizer to lay in the 35mm stereo fullcoat that was match-coded to the 16mm.* The advantage to this was that we could continue using 16mm equipment (except for splicer and synchronizer rental). The great disadvantage: this is excessively cumbersome, particularly if extensive recutting is foreseen.

3) *Cut in stereo 35mm fullcoat, with left and right stereo channels and a mix track channel.* This was the alternative we chose, for several reasons. Multi-channel heads in 35mm are readily available in mixing studios, alleviating problems of track limitation. More important, it saved a work step while retaining all the qualitative advantages of editing sound in 35mm. Since many changes in the music necessitating picture recuts were foreseen, this system offered the maximum amount of flexibility.

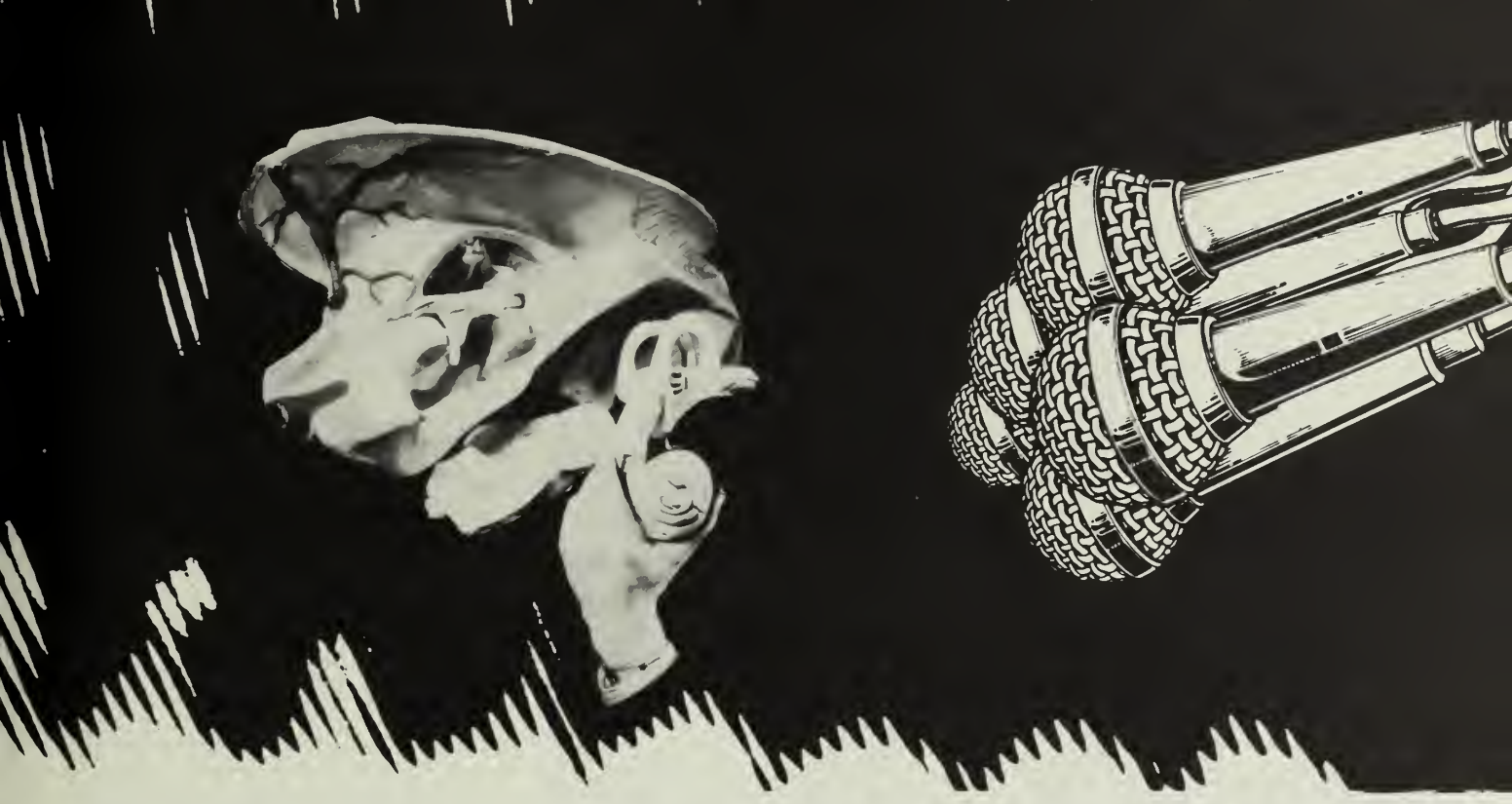
We rented a 16/35mm Steenbeck (not too common, but they're there) and cut our 35mm track directly against the 16mm picture. As we had no multi-track head (difficult to come by on Steenbecks, less so on KEMs and Moviolas), we could only listen to our third (A plus B mix) track, which was usually sufficient. Before the mix, though, I listened to make sure perspectives remained constant—sure enough, I discovered mistakes that I couldn't perceive on the Steenbeck's single mono head.

Before beginning to edit the sound effects, we carefully planned which sounds needed to be in stereo and which in mono. The mono sound effects were handled in 16mm, just as the dialogue had been; only stereo sounds were cut in 35mm. The added perception of depth in a stereo scene necessitates its own aesthetic considerations. Hajdenberg opted to use stereo selectively, to reinforce the impact of certain scenes. For example, *Stripper* opens with a black-and-white photo montage of the early days of burlesque; as the music increases in tempo, the film suddenly bursts into full color and motion. To strengthen this visual explosion, mono effects were laid in prior to the color scene; then, suddenly, stereo comes in. The first color shot is, simply, a bar on a street, but the passage of a car passing from right to left on screen is underscored by the sound literally travelling from right to left speaker.

There are two ways to prepare for this effect. One method is simply to lay in a car-by that has been recorded in stereo, the mic configuration capturing the sense of the car travelling through a three-dimensional space. Another, and in some ways simpler, way—if many car-bys are to be used in the scene—is to use a mono car-by and have the mixer pan, or assign the sound first to one speaker, then to another (if recorded in stereo, the pan is inherent in the two tracks, though it can be boosted or diminished). Behind this mono effect, an atmosphere (in this case, a city street presence) recorded in stereo must be placed on the track so that a fully dimensional space is felt.

In the *Stripper* opening, a motorcycle gang zooms past, not from left to right but from behind the camera into the frame, and then races into the distance. To give this scene maximum punch, we placed three separate motocycle gang-bys (two with similar group sounds, one with a more specific individual motorcycle sound) on 16mm mono tracks. Individually, these tracks were simply motorcycle-bys with the sound peaking when the bikes were nearest to the camera, but with no strong spatiality. To achieve the proper perspective, the sound was assigned at the mix first to the surround speakers, then to the left and right speakers, and finally to the center, so that, in the final mix, the sound literally travels from behind the audience towards the center. Talk about grabbing the audience's attention!

Thrills aside, the dominant aesthetic principle in using stereo in *Stripper* was not to make people



aware of directionality on screen, but to more subtly create full, vibrant spaces. This was particularly true of the many performance sequences in which a full nightclub atmosphere was created by laying in presences and applause that had orginally been recorded in stereo. Particular care was spent on the introduction of stereo sounds to ensure that they would not pop in and call attention to themselves (except for a few instances when maximum punch was required). The sound supervisor and mixer worked together to achieve the appropriate interweaving of sounds and spatial dimensions.

As music plays a paramount role in *Stripper* (a record will probably be released concurrently with the film), particular attention was paid to the music editing. The picture was cut against 16mm mono scratch transfers from location recordings or records. In almost every case the original music was finally replaced by a different piece that was either specifically composed for the sequence or that was simply felt to work better (or, sometimes, because rights were unavailable). Since music changes often entailed picture changes, music transfers were done in 16 and 35mm, allowing the editors to recut their pictures to the 16mm track and, only when everything was complete, laying in the fresh match-coded 35mm stereo track. While the picture editors cut the performance music, a music editor, Scott Grusen, was hired to lay in the scored music and make any little adjustments in the 35mm final music track. Grusen used an upright Moviola with a 16mm picture head and a three-track sound head, enabling him to deal with each individual track of 35mm fullcoat. He thus had the best possible element (multi-track 35mm), while costs were kept to a minimum by waiting to switch to this mode at the end of picture editing.

The constant interchange between 16 and 35mm may seem a bit confusing, but the system is actually fairly simple. Furthermore, it is not much more expensive than cutting entirely in 16mm, and much cheaper than editing entirely in 35mm. The qualitative gains inherent in the use of 35mm are worth the extra transfer costs, especially since only final music pieces are laid. To keep transfer costs down, used fullcoat mag stock was bought and degaussed for FX transfers (but beware of old splices: some are audible). As mag quality is most critical for music, music transfers were done entirely on new stock.

Elements brought to the mix consisted of 16mm dialogue and FX tracks, and 35mm FX, music, and Foley fullcoats. Each of the 35mm elements had multi-tracks, so the cue sheets reflected many tracks with a limited number of elements. Although much of this discussion of sound editing has focused on 35mm tracks, it should be emphasized that most of the sound editing, including most specific effects (as distinguished from atmospheres) were laid in 16mm. Only with stereo was 35mm stock used, resulting in significant savings.

The importance of the mix, and the mixer's competence, cannot be overemphasized. When preparing for a mix the producer or sound editor must find out the particular studio's capabilities. Independent producers should also be aware that a Dolby stereo mix has an inherent cost increase due to a two-stage mixing process. A normal mono mix entails mixing from two to 20 (or more) edited tracks down to three or four tracks on a single 35mm fullcoat master. The three final tracks are usually dialogue, music and FX; the fourth is for narration (or anything else you choose). Thus, even after the mix, discrete sounds are available should recutting occur (or should a music and FX track be needed for international distribution). In a Dolby stereo mix, discrete sounds are no longer available as, for example, music and dialogue are mixed into the left speaker together.

To ensure maximum flexibility and allow us to make last minute changes, Lee Dichter, our mixer, proposed a stem mix. Instead of mixing to a single four-track master, with each track representing a speaker assignment, he mixed each category of sound (dialogue, music, and FX) to its own separate four-track speaker-assigned master. Thus all elements remained discrete, yet were speaker-assigned to what had become, essentially, a 12-track master. (Dichter kept the master on three 35mm fullcoats instead of one multi-track tape because the sprockets on the 35mm fullcoat allowed any recuts to exactly match picture recuts.)

The preparation for a Dolby stereo mix is not particularly complicated. For the sound editor, a careful planning of stereo ambiences is required. For the producer, an understanding of the additional complexity and costs (and how these can best be restrained) is necessary. But if, while preparing for the mix, the stereo sound doesn't seem worth the additional trouble, simply select any stereo ambience, such as a forest bird presence, and put on a pair of stereo headphones. The intense feeling of being in a physical forest glade will remind you of what you're after.

Douglas Smith is a freelance film editor for both narratives and documentaries whose credits include Journey to the Heart of China, Eugene's Valet, and Le Fil d'Ariane.

©Douglas W. Smith 1985



The Hawaii fest's scholarly bent and down-to-earth quality make it a welcome respite from the usual festival glitz.

HONOLULU: HAWAIIAN EYE

With the East-West Center its major sponsor and source of funding, the annual Hawaii International Film Festival is characterized by a decidedly humanistic perspective. This, and the fact that it may be the only international festival to be organized by an academic institution, make the HIFF unique. Last year, its theme was "When Strangers Meet," which expressed the festival planners' aim that the festival should be a learning experience, that it reflect the East-West interaction, and that the films allow the viewers a glimpse of other cultures as those cultures see themselves.

In addition to the free screenings, the festival offers a grab bag of symposia, workshops, and discussions with a keenly interested and knowledgeable audience. Last year's symposia leaned towards both the relatively arcane (Indian film music) to more mainstream concerns, such as women in film. Das Gupta Chitananda, an Indian film critic and 1984 festival juror, explained that bigger festivals like Cannes "are more concerned with new aesthetic perspectives. At this festival, the film selections are more purposive: they're more interested in the culture behind the film." In a word, the HIFF is a highly participatory one, where filmmakers are encouraged to interact with one another, with audiences, and with critics and academics.

The workshops were practice-oriented. John Sayles, whose *The Brother from Another Planet* was screened, conducted one on screenwriting, while Carroll Ballard, director of *Never Cry Wolf* (also screened), spoke on how to make your own movie within the studio system. (*Never Cry Wolf* was the first independent film that Walt Disney Productions financed and marketed over which it had no creative control.)

The HIFF is *not* an outlet for television and distribution/buyer deals. There are no formal marketing sections. Loni Ding, a San Francisco-based filmmaker whose *Nisei Soldier: Standard Bearer of an Exiled People* was invited to the festival, said she thinks the HIFF should consider such independent needs as marketing and distribution, although she said she "met a number of people, like author and screenwriter Jeanne Houston (*Farewell to Manzanar*), at the festival. We may work on something together."

According to Ding, who had been invited months before the festival, the festival "took care of everything" from round-trip plane fare to hotel accommodations—although this wasn't the case with last-minute attendees like Mark Schwartz and Geoffrey Dunn, whose *Dollar a Day, Ten Cents a Dance* was screened. Festival chair Jeannette Paulson explained, "We could only afford to pay for 30 people, and that included film critics, speakers, and jurors as well as filmmakers." She's not sure how many participants the HIFF can pay for in 1985, but there are numerous tour and charter packages, especially from the West Coast, that are quite reasonable.

Honolulu papers and various community organs cover the festival films and events quite extensively. And attendance has grown to 30,000 in the span of four years. But it is perhaps the easygoing informality, and the prospects of networking that, for filmmakers, are the most appealing aspects of the festival. Those I spoke to found the absence of glitter and hype—staples at many festivals—and the corresponding emphasis on films and discussions a welcome change. Because the East-West Center is located on the Honolulu campus of the University of Hawaii, there are numerous classrooms and seminar rooms available for filmmakers to rescreen their films to smaller groups, or just to get together to talk. For instance, Filipino filmmaker Kidlat Tahimik (*Perfumed Nightmare*) showed long rushes of his next work-in-progress to a group of interested people in order to solicit both feedback and financial support.

This noncommercial festival is also noncompetitive, with the exception of the East-West Award, given to the film the jurors think "best promotes understanding between the peoples of Asia, the Pacific and the United States by providing insights which deepen our appreciation of another culture." Last year, Wu Tian-Ming's *River Without Buoys* (People's Republic of China) won; the other contenders were Sayles's *The Brother from Another Planet,* Allen Fong's *Ah Ying* (Hong Kong), and Mrinal Sen's *The Case Is Closed* (India). —*Luis H. Francia*

This year's festival will be held on the island of Maui from Nov. 26–30, then in Honolulu from Dec. 1–7. 16mm, ¾" and ½" cassettes accepted for screening. Include film's running time, category (feature, documentary, short), synopsis, return address, and date by which film must be returned. Festival pays return postage; no entry fee. Deadline: June 1. Send submissions to: Jeannette Paulson, Chair, Hawaii International Film Festival, East-West Center, 1777 East-West Road, Honolulu, HI 96848.

Luis H. Francia is a poet, freelance writer, and film editor of Bridge magazine.

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TELLURIDE: DISCREET CHARMS

"Small is beautiful" could describe Telluride, a gathering of independent and foreign filmmakers, art house owners, and an elite audience which pays upward of $200 for the privilege of rubbing elbows, or perhaps picking up a softball game, with the likes of Bertrand Tavernier, Werner Herzog, Wim Wenders, Andrei Tarkovsky, or Stan Brakhage in the Colorado Rockies.

This is not to say that a young, unknown filmmaker has no chance of being screened at this Labor Day festival. Stella Pense, Telluride's co-director, with her husband Bill, since its inception 12 years ago, told *The Independent* to "urge people to send us films. We screen everything." But the figures are more sobering. Pense estimates that she received 50 to 75 unsolicited submissions, mostly shorts, from the U.S. last year; six to 10 were accepted for screening. Standards are high: "Other festivals are more inclusive or liberal. We have a very high-tech audience. We put great stock on the professionalism of a film." Among the films Telluride has screened are Wajda's *A Love in Germany*, Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo,* Makaveyev's *Montenegro,* and Malle's *My Dinner with Andre.* Last year, U.S. independent works included *Stranger than Paradise, The Times of Harvey Milk, America and Lewis Hine,* and *Go Tell It on the Mountain.*

For features, which make up the bulk of the 50 films exhibited, Pense says she calls "known filmmakers" and receives calls from programmers and others with informed suggestions. Cannes is the only festival the Penses attend. Because Telluride serves as the annual meeting-place for the loosely-knit Association of Specialized Film Exhibitors, and has a good reputation for attracting distributors on vacation, films do get bought and selected for other festivals, although there is no organized market.

"A film has to be virgin," Pense says—it can't have appeared in other festivals, or been shown on TV, or theatrically released. The press is not encouraged to review the films shown, and there are no prizes, so films can still go on to other festivals—including those that only show premieres, like the New York Film Festival—and be marketed without a predetermined image. (*Stranger than Paradise, The Times of Harvey Milk,* and *America and Lewis Hine* all went on to the New York Film Festival in 1984, as have many of the foreign films Telluride has shown.) In short, a film can be helped by good word-of-mouth from the heavies who attend, but can't be hurt by bad press.

The festival pays rental fees only on "very rare occasions," such as the Robert Breer retrospective last year. Telluride's budget for travel and expenses, and the number of tickets it hands out to filmmakers, is limited. There are people who are willing to pay for your seat: the whole program sells out before the films are even announced.

If you have something you think the Penses will like, write or call with particulars. They screen all summer in New Hampshire.

—Robert Aaronson

Festival dates: Aug. 30–Sept. 2. Contact: PO Box B1156, Hanover, NH 03755; (603) 643-1255. Festival address: 119 West Colorado Ave., Telluride, CO 81345; (303) 728-4401.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement,** and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

● *CINDY COMPETITION,* Los Angeles, Nov. 23. Sponsored by the Association of Visual Communicators (formerly the IFPA), this event received about 1,000 submissions last year for 200 plaques in 17 categories including education, industrial, public service, training, sales, etc. The student category includes drama & last year there was a music video slot. Fees: $60–$90. Formats: 16mm, ¾", slide shows, 35mm filmstrips & videodiscs. Contact: Michael Nilan, 900 Palm Ave., Suite B, South Pasadena, CA 91030; (818) 441-2274.

● *DENVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* Colorado, Oct. 16–20. This invitational event screens about 60 films for audiences up to 20,000.



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Denver Film Society director Ron Henderson leads a selection committee of 6 local film people. According to Diane Gutwillig of Tony Silver Films, which produced *Style Wars* (shown in the children's section), Denver was a "good experience" which lead to rentals in the area. The festival, budgeted at $250,000 hosted the world premiere of *The Razor's Edge* and a "special premiere" of *Stop Making Sense,* which included an evening with Jonathan Demme. In the New American Cinema Section, three films were featured: Joel & Ethan Coen's *Blood Simple,* John Hanson & Sandra Schulberg's *Wildrose,* & Thomas Cohen's *Massive Retaliation.* All three directors attended the festival, as did Jackie Ochs & Robert Mugge, whose *Secret Agent & Cool Running: The Reggae Movie,* plus *Gospel According Al Green* were screened in the documentary section respectively. The remaining films were an eclectic mix of foreign films & retrospectives. Each film is usually preceded by a short up to 20 minutes. According to Henderson, the festival likes to get a film before it's picked up by a distributor, because they can usually make a better deal with the filmmaker directly. No fees, no forms, no prizes. To enter, send a letter with a print, or call. Deadline: June–Sept. Format: 16 & 35mm, but will preview on ¾", VHS & Beta. Contact: 609 E. Speer Blvd., PO Box 17508, Denver, CO 80217; (303) 744-1031.

● *INTERCOM,* Chicago, Sept. 11. Produced by Michael Kutza, director of the Chicago Film Festival, this 21-year-old event is perhaps the largest informational festival in the country. Submissions invited in over 60 categories for industrial & government films, educational institutions, corporate communications & public information. ¾" & VHS, 70, 35, 16mm, & filmstrips eligible. Deadline: May 30. Contact: Intercom, 415 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 644-3400.

● *MARIN COUNTY NATIONAL FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION,* California, July 3–7. Cash prizes of $1,000, $900, & $800 in independent, animation & student categories respectively. Works must be suitable for children. Winning works screened at the Marin County Fair & Exposition, which attracts 70,000. Max. running time: 30 min. Separate juries of producers, critics & writers for each format. Director: Ron Levaco, professor, San Francisco State. 16mm & ¾" eligible. Fee: $10. Deadline: May 31. Contact: Yolanda F. Sullivan, Marin County Fair & Expo, Fairgrounds, San Rafael, CA 94903; (415) 499-6400.

● *NATIONAL VIDEO FESTIVAL & STUDENT COMPETITION/EXHIBITION,* Los Angeles, Sept. 19–22. For the 5th year, video artists & media professionals will gather at the American Film Institute for four days of exhibitions & discussions. The festival is one of the most comprehensively-curated programs of its kind. Hundreds of tapes were shown in 1984 under the headings of Television: Cultural Form; Ways of Seeing: Points of View; From the Narrative: Screening; Image & Sound: Collaboration (see "The Problems of Pluralism: AFI Video Festival," *The Independent,* Jan./Feb. 1985). Student competition is "open to students enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution for at least 1 term during the 1984/5 academic year." Awards, including ½" editing equipment, go to regional & national winners. As part of the expanded student program in 1985, a guest curator will design an exhibition "representative of the kinds of work students are doing: new trends, concerns & politics," according to festival director Jackie Kain. "We want to get beyond the best," she explained, "and present an overview." In addition to being eligible for prizes, students whose work is selected will receive a $50 honorarium & screening fee of $1 per minute. Fee:

$5. Max. running time: 60 min. Format: ¾". Tape deadline: May 24. The deadline for forms has passed, so contact immediately: Connie Conrow, NVF, Box 27999, 2021 North Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7743. Forms available at AIVF (send SASE).

● *NEW JERSEY VIDEO & FILM CELEBRATION OF ACCESS TELEVISION,* Essex Community College, June 15. Limited to NJ cable access productions. Categories include municipal, educational, public access & "produced at an access center." Last year the event received 100 entries and awarded 17 prizes. Coordinator Tami Gold of the sponsoring organization Newark Mediaworks called the evening awards ceremony "a real media event," with work shown to a full house of 200 on 20 monitors suspended from the ceiling. ¾" & VHS only. Deadline: late May. Contact: Newark Mediaworks, PB Box 1019, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 690-5474.

● *NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL,* Sept. 27–Oct. 13. 23 features were screened at the 22nd NYFF last year; 7 were U.S. productions. According to programmer Jack Barth, only 5–10% of unsolicited features are accepted for exhibition, with shorts having a better chance. The staff of the Lincoln Center Film Society is well known for its comprehensive grasp of the international film scene. This year, Chicago film critic Dave Kehr joins the selection committee. Among last year's independent features were Nina Rosenblum's *America & Lewis Hine,* Diego Echeverria's *Los Sures,* Robert Epstein & Richard Schmiechen's *The Times of Harvey Milk,* Ethan & Joel Coen's *Blood Simple,* Victor Nunez's *A Flash of Green,* and Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger than Paradise.* All films screened received coverage in the *New York Times* & are practically assured New York theatrical release. AIVF executive director Lawrence Sapadin serves as advisor on American independent films. No fee. Maker pays RT shipping. Format: 16 & 35mm. Deadline: films on cassette over 31 mins.: June 17; 16 & 35mm films over 31 minutes & shorts under 30 mins., any format: July 1. Contact: Jack Barth, New York Film Festival, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 140 W. 65th St., NY, NY 10023; (212) 877-1800.

● *NEW YORK, NEW YORK ALL MEDIA INTERNATIONAL JURIED ART COMPETITION,* July/August. First annual event for work in 16 art forms, including ¾" & VHS videotapes. Screenings planned at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum & elsewhere. Makers asked to deposit work permanently with the competition's archive. Fee: $10–$35. Contact: Yaffa Berel, International Juried Art Competition, Box 584, Bronxville, NY 10708; (914) 835-4484, 939-1177, or 668-2572.

● *PUBLIC RELATIONS FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL,* New York, October. Sponsored by the Public Relations Society of America, this 16th showcase is for in-house and sponsored productions in 8 categories, including corporate/institutional identity, community relations, public education & product exposure. Work must have been completed Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 1984. Fees: $125–$150. Format: 16mm & ¾". Deadline: July 1. Contact: Marilyn Gamblin, PRSA, 845 Third Ave., NY, NY 10022; (212) 826-1750.

● *SAN ANTONIO CINEFESTIVAL,* Texas, Aug. 16–23. Films & videotapes submitted to this event must directly refer to the Hispanic community. Beyond that, if the work is not pornographic or exploitative, it will be exhibited. According to festival director Eduardo Diaz, "The whole purpose of the festival is for people to have their stuff seen." Out of the 50 works shown in '84 at the 410-seat Guadalupe theater, Diaz invited 20 from the international com-

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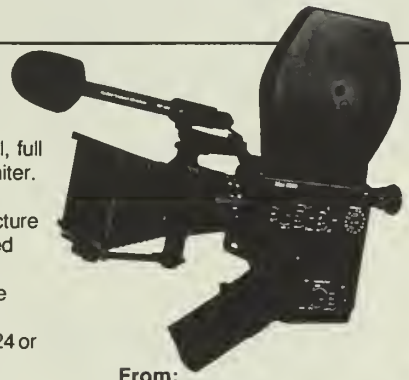
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munity, including 8 as part of a special series on Mexican independent cinema. Other screenings included *Pixote, Alsino y el Condor, Alambrista, When the Mountains Tremble, El Norte, Blood Wedding,* & *The Last Supper, Aqui Se Lo Halla, Children of Violence,* the WGBH series *Heat Wave,* & *Guazapa.* Videos & short films are shown during day & early evening & invited films are screened at night. Final program includes distribution information. Says Diaz, "We're trying to create an environment in which to discuss issues, problems, techniques." Fee: $15. Deadline: July 12. Format: ¾", 16 & 35mm. contact: Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, 1300 Guadalupe St., San Antonio, TX 78207; (512) 271-3151/3.

FOREIGN

● *BESANCON INTERNATIONAL MUSIC AND CHOREOGRAPHIC FILM FESITVAL,* France. Sept. 15–24. "Any film that successfully joins a picture & good music" is eligible, according to the entry form. 13th year. Makers pay shipping both ways. Format: 35 & 16mm or "video cassettes identical to the original version." Features & shorts eligible. Deadline: forms, June 1; films: Sept. 15. Contact: Festival du Film Musical, 2d rue Isenbart, 25090 Besancon, France; tel. (81) 80.73.26; telex 360 242 Essi-Besan.

● *CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL,* Toronto, August. Over 600 films from 40 countries were entered in last year's 5th annual international showcase, held previously in Ottawa. The jury of 5, which included U.S. animator Jane Aaron, selected 96 for competition. The festival, while known for exhibiting new technology, encourages non-commercial work & celebrates animation. Panels & a market make this a meeting place for filmmakers. 40% of those with work in competititon attended. Prizewinners represented 7 countries, from Canada to China, with U.S. animator Michael Sporn's *Dr. DeSoto* garnering best film for children. The festival budget weighs in at a hefty $350,000 & the event runs five days. Format: 16 & 35mm, ¾" video. No max. running time; though most films screened are under 30 mins. Features may be screened if world premieres. Deadline: forms: late May; films: mid-June. No fee. Contact: Box 5009 Station F, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4Y2T1; tel. (416) 364-5924/8024; telex 0623499 AMFESTTOR.

● *EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* Scotland, Aug. 10–25. Now in its 39th year, the film event is part of a much larger arts celebration. Approximately 15,000 people attended the films alone in 1984. U.S. independents included Charles Burnett's *My Brother's Wedding,* Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger than Paradise,* Don Lenzer's *Dummy Love in the Atomic Age,* Billy Woodberry's *Bless Their Little Hearts,* Roberta Cantow's *If This Ain't Heaven,* Jill Godmilow's *Far From Poland,* Dina & Marisa Silver's *Old Enough,* Ken Kimmelman's *Reaganocchio* & Carol Dysinger's *Unicorn.* Director Jim Hickey travels worldwide to invite films. Not a lot of business, but an enjoyable opportunity to have your film screened for an appreciative audience. Fee: 10 English pounds. Format: 16 & 35mm. Fest may pay for portion of travel & accommodations. Deadline: forms: May 13; films: June 13. Contact: Filmhouse, 88 Lothian Rd., Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ Scotland, UK; tel. 031 228 6382; telex 72165.

● *GUILDE EUROPEENE DU RAID,* France. This organization sponsors 2 film festivals every year. First is the International Forum on Sport Film held in Montpelier. Last year's invitees included Craig Davidson's *There Was Always Sun Shining Someplace* & Francis Freeland's *The First International Hang Gliding Competition at Pico.* Fest is interested in feature narratives & documentaries as well as shorts, TV productions, commercials & other sports-related productions. The 2nd festival is the International Film Festival of Real Life Adventure. For the 9th year this event will take place at the "famous ski resort" of La Plagne. Fest wants "films about any kind of adventure, such as mountain expeditions, Arctic travel, sailing races around the world, ballooninig, underwater diving, scientific explorations & any kind of outstanding performances." Dates: Sport Film: Sept. 26–29; Real Life: Dec. 12–15. Deadline for Montpelier: now–June 30; La Plagne: now–Nov. 12. ¾" preferred for preview. Address: Guilde Europeene du Raid, 11 rue de Vaugirard, 75006 Paris, France: Attn: Sylvie Barbe, tel (1) 326 9752.

● *INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* France, September. Open to "films on knowledge of nature, attacks on nature, protection of nature, alerting people to environmental problems." Film & video completed within last 18 months eligible. Max. running time: 60 min. format: 16 & 35mm, ¾". No fee. Contact: RIENA, 27 rue de L'Echiquier, 75010 Paris, France; tel. (1) 523 3146; telex 643744 F.

● *INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE,* Italy, July/August. Categories include: films for children 6 to 12; teenagers; juvenile problems. Fiction, animation, documentary & experimental in any length produced within the last two years. Deadline; forms: late May; films: July. Format: 16mm & 35mm only. No fee. Contact: Festival Internazionale del Cinema per i Ragazzi e per le Gioventu, 84095 Giffoni Valle Piana, Salerno, Italy; tel. (089) 86 8544.

● *INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ECONOMIC & TRAINING FILMS,* Brussels, November. Open to business films about management & employees & public relations made in the past 8 years. No fee. Deadline: forms: late May; prints: late June. Formats S-8, 16mm, ¾" & VHS, PAL & NTSC. Contact: Festival International de film Economique et de Formation, c/o Cerle Solvay, Av. Franklin Roosevelt 48, 1050 Brussels, Belgium; tel. (02) 649-00-30 ext. 2528.

● *LA ROCHELLE INTERNATIONAL SAILING FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* France, Oct. 30–Nov. 3. This 5th biennial is a major event in the sailing world & for the town of La Rochelle. The posters, catalogue & regulations all indicate a well-financed, professional operation. It *is* about sailing (not one of your more low-budget diversions). Audience range: 8,000–10,000. Documentaries, narratives, instructional films & animation eligible. In '83, 8 U.S. films were shown, including prize-winners *Friendship Sloop* & *Eighteen Footers.* All accommodations & meals paid for if you can get to Paris. Winners get the red carpet (dinner with the mayor). A distribution agency has been set up for the festival films. Festival pays return shipping. Deadline: forms: Aug. 15; work: Sept. 1. Format: 16 & 35mm; ¾", VHS & Beta. No fees. Contact: Michel Masse, dir., Festival du film de Voile, Port de Minimes, 17005 La Rochelle, France; tel. (46) 45.41.42 or 45.14.03.

● *MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL,* Canada, Aug. 21–Sept. 1. U.S. features in the competition & official sections tend to be Hollywood productions, although Gregory Nava's *El Norte* won the Grand Prize of the Americas in 1984. (The Festival of New Cinema, held in November in Montreal, is a more likely showcase for U.S. independent features.) Anthony Herrera's *Mississippi Delta Blues* and Bernice Mast's *Family Romance* were screened last year. In 1985, in recognition of International Youth Year, they are inviting new works by filmmakers age 15 to 25 in

film or video. This section has a special deadline of June 14. There is also an extensive market. Format: 16 & 35mm. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Serge Losique, festival director, The World Film Festival-Montreal, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3G 1M8; tel. (514) 879-4057 or 7285; telex 05-25472 WOFILMFEST.

● *SAN SEBASTIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* Spain, September. Still the biggest and glitziest festival in Spain (budgeted at $600,000, according to *Variety*), they're very nice about sending invitations to U.S. makers & representatives, but may only cover accommodations, if that (see "San Sebastian Still Reigns," *The Independent,* May 1984). Pat Russell's *Reaching Out* was the only U.S. film screened last year. The video section is more open. Lyn Blumenthal and Kate Horsfield from Chicago Video Data Bank attended, along with videomakers Max Almy and Bill Viola. Deadline: forms: late May. Contact: Apartado Correos, 397 Reina Regati, s/n San Sebastian, Spain; tel. 43 424 106; telex 36228.

● *TYNESIDE FILM FESTIVAL,* England, October. Substantial cash prizes for features, shorts & videos. This festival, run for 8 years by Sheila Whitaker, highlights "independent cinema across the world." Possible broadcast on England's Channel 4. Over 100 films shown. Formats: 16 & 35mm; ¾", & VHS. No fees. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Tyneside Film Festival, Tyneside Cinema, 10/12 Pilgrim St., Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 6QG, England; tel. 0632 321507.

● *VARNA WORLD ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL,* Bulgaria, October. A major biennial event, Varna focuses mainly on East European product, although *Variety* covers it & animators & festival programmers worldwide attend. In 1983 submissions came from 21 countries—but not from the U.S., although ASIFA president John Halas spoke. Categories include: shorts, features, children's animation, TV productions, student films & 1st films. Format: 16 & 35mm. Films awarded prizes at Annecy or Zagreb not eligible. Deadline: forms: mid-July; prints: mid-Aug. Contact: Organizing Committee, Bulgarfilm, 96 Rakovski St., Sofia 1000, Bulgaria; tel. 59506/884183; telex 22447 Filmex BG.

● *WORLD WIDE VIDEO FESTIVAL,* The Hague, September. In 4 years, this event has become one of the most widely known of all video festivals (see "Kicks at the Kijkhuis," *The Independent,* March 1984). Hundred of tapes in all styles, genres & lengths were shown practically around the clock last year. Organizer Tom Van Vliet usually comes to the U.S. in the spring. Deadline: June 1. Format: ¾". Contact before sending work: Noordeinde 140, 2514 GP Den Haag, Holland; tel. (070) 651880.

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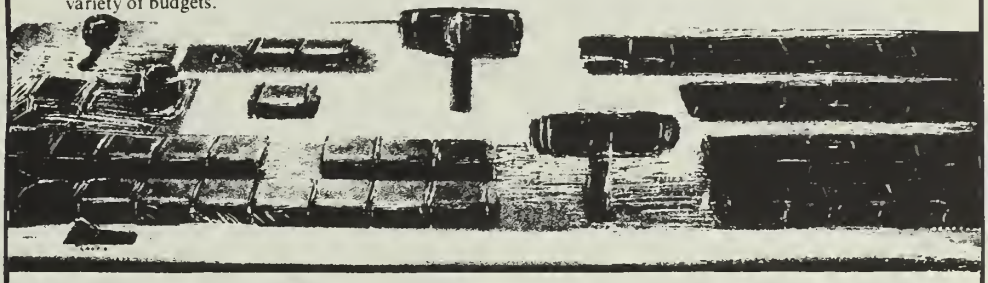
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Courtesy filmmaker

Eric Lau's angst-ridden "Ragged Edge" won the best narrative award at the Hong Kong Independent Film Festival.

The Language Detective descends into his own semiotic hell when Peggy and Fred defy futurespeak in Leslie Thornton's work-in-progress.



Courtesy Filmmaker

Narrative film and videomakers approach the task of creating a fictional world from many different directions. Leslie Thornton's work-in-progress, **Peggy and Fred in Hell**, explores the comforting idea that hell is "both language and its absence." The time is the future. Technology has usurped nature, and the laws of language and physics have collapsed. Chaos is spreading and everyone speaks only in the future tense. The military hires a language detective to investigate Peggy and Fred, two "child/adults" who speak in archaic tenses. Complications arise when the detective "slips from the path of rational scientific inquiry and becomes obsessed with *something he can't name.*" *Peggy and Fred in Hell,* in black-and-white, is slated for completion in August 1985.

Speech and silence are equally isolating for two lovers in a disintegrating relationship. **Give Me a Spell**, a 20-minute 16mm color film directed by Guido Chiesa, follows a couple's alternating acceptance and rejection of each other. Shot for $6,000, with co-production from Otto Grokenberger of Munich and New Films Focus of New York, *Give Me a Spell* will travel the festival circuit and appears in a short film festival at New York's Squat Theatre this month. It is distributed by Chiesa's own Swampland Productions in New York.

Recent NYU film school graduate Eric Lau has garnered the best narrative award at the 1985 Hong Kong Independent Film Festival for his 52-minute color work, **Ragged Edge.** The story of a man whose confused, abusive family relationships drive him to insanity and murder, *Ragged Edge* explores the difficulty of survival in a society that has little time for healing those unfortunate enough to be victimized by its sacred institutions. Lau wrote, directed, produced, and edited the film for three years while working as a waiter and attending NYU. Director of photography was Ernest Dickerson, who later filmed John Sayles's *Brother from Another Planet.* Principle roles are performed by Tibor Feldman, Ric Gitlan and Paul Barnett.

Filmmaker/actress Leslie Levinson has completed her 31-minute black-and-white film, **Inseparable,** a semi-autobiographical story of an aspiring artist and the Bohemian circles in which she travels. Levinson wrote, directed, and starred in *Inseparable,* which she began five years ago as a project for the Women's Interart Center 16mm Narrative Film Workshop in New York. Prize money from the Brooklyn Arts and Cultural Association annual film contest allowed her to shoot additional footage and expand her story, as did support from John Reitz, who produced the project and also appears in the film. Levinson's future goal is to "put women on the screen in a way they've never been seen" and to "obliterate stereotypes."

Producer/director Liane Brandon, founding member of the New Day Film Co-op and professor of media studies and film production at the University of Massachusetts, is in production with **How To Prevent a Nuclear War,** a documentary about what average people can do to stop the Big One. Instead of focusing on the gruesome consequences of nuclear disaster, Brandon says *How To Prevent a Nuclear War* is intended to "celebrate life; to invigorate rather than depress; to motivate rather than paralyze." Much of the labor on the project has been donated by Boston-area independents such as cinematographer Boyd Estus, associate producer Ann Carol Grossman and production coordinator Carol Shedd, while folksinger Tom Lehrer donated the rights to his music for the project. The film has been endorsed by Physicians for Social Responsibility. Brandon estimates the film will cost about $44,000.

Taking another tack on the nuclear issue, Sam Love and Kathleen Quaife of Washington, DC's Public Communications Incorporated have joined the elite corps of filmmakers whose works have been denied educational certification by the United States Information Agency (which later reversed its decision on appeal). Their 22-minute color film, **Radiation: Impact on Life,** details the effects of high-level radiation on the body "using eyewitness accounts and newsreels of Hiroshima after the bomb." It also explores the effects of low-level radiation from X-ray and industrial sources. The film was recently named best didactic film at the Scientific Film Festival in Bar-

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celona, Spain. "After being initially rejected by our government as not being educational, we are pleased that it has won an international award," said producer Love.

In February, PBS aired **The Precious Legacy,** a documentary by Dan Weissman and Nelson E. Breen about the State Jewish Museum of Czechoslovakia. The Nazis established the museum to preserve the possessions of the Czechoslovakian Jews whom they were sending to concentration camps. Originally designed to mock "an extinct race," the museum's carefully preserved and catalogued collection has become a rare archive of Judaic art. The half-hour film was produced with funding from Philip Morris, Inc. in conjunction with a touring exhibition from the museum. It is distributed by Talking Pictures in New York.

Gaza Ghetto, an 82-minute color documentary produced by Joan Mandell, Pea Holmquist, and Pierre Bjorklund, will be screened at New York's Film Forum, May 29–June 11. Shot during a two-year period "under extremely difficult conditions," *Gaza Ghetto* portrays a Palestinian refugee family living in the Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza strip. It was funded by the Swedish Film Institute and Swedish Television's International Development Agency.

"Independent filmmaking is alive and well on Miami Beach," reports Sheryl Riley, whose company, Smiley Riley Productions, completed a one-and-a-half minute 16mm comedy entitled **Instant Appeal** this past winter. The film depicts a video dating service where the client is not only put on the screen, but made immediately attractive in the process. It was written, directed and produced by Steven Levien and shot and edited by Riley. The film was screened at the Miami International Film Festival. Levien and Riley are now working on a second short, called *Transplant,* scheduled for completion this spring, and look forward to producting their own feature film in the not-too-distant future.

And video isn't doing too badly in Bozeman, Montana. Producers Ronn Bayly and Susan Regele completed **A.B. Guthrie's Vanishing Paradise,** a half-hour profile of the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Shane.* The piece was aired in January 1985 on public television station KUED in Salt Lake City, Utah and received a citation at the recent Northwest Film and Video Festival. Funded in part by the Montana Committee for the Humanities, *Vanishing Paradise* will be distributed to other PBS stations throughout the year. Bayly and Regele previously-produced the documentary *Jeannette Rankin —The Woman Who Voted No,* shown by PBS in 1984 and 1985.

Judi Fogelman's fifth film, **Handing the Baton,** a two-and-a-half minute animation, was completed in December. Rotoscoped and abstract images of a long-distance runner designed by Fogelman, Helen Hester, and George Namoki are narrated by 1984 American Book Award winner by Maurice Kenny, who also wrote the title poem.

Producer/director Stuart A. Goldman of New York's Multi-Media Masters reports that the one-hour documentary, **Alberta Hunter: My Castle's Rockin'!,** a portrait of of the late blues singer and composer, will be completed in late summer of 1985. After 20 years of self-imposed obscurity, Hunter made a musical comeback at the age of 82. The film was begun as a 10-minute corporate motivational film and won an American Film Festival red ribbon and a Cine Golden Eagle in 1983. Deciding that there was much more to Hunter's story than could be told in 10 minutes, Goldman expanded the film to its present length. It is written by Chris Albertson and shot by Jack Churchill. *My Castle's Rockin'!* is intended for PBS broadcast in 1986.

Tom Davenport (Grimm's fairy tale series) of Delaplane, Virginia is editing his one-hour documentary, **A Singing Stream,** tentatively scheduled for release this fall. "A study of the roots of gospel in the context of the community that supports it," the film depicts the important role of spiritual music and religion in several generations of a black southern family... John Hanson (*Wildrose*) will take his new screenplay, **Happy Hour,** for a workout at the Sundance Institute this summer...And Fanlight Productions of Boston (*Code Gray: Ethical Dilemmas in Nursing*) has released six new titles on health-related issues this year, including **Good Monday Morning,** which explores the struggles of women office workers to change working conditions in the corporate arena.

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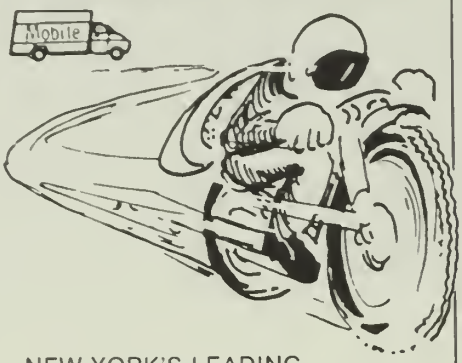
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Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. Send notices to: **THE INDEPENDENT**, c/o FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, attn.: Notices. For further information, call: (212) 473-3400. Deadline: 8th of second preceding month (e.g. May 8 for the July issue).

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● *FOR SALE:* Bolex H-16 w/Angenieux 12-120, 10 Switar, 2 400′ mags, barney, crystal sync, battery, case, $2,200 or best offer; Rex-5, 16 Yvar, Macro-Switar 26 & 75, tripod, case, $1,300 or best offer; Uher 4200 recorder, case, nicad, cables, $350. Also Minolta color meter, Bolex H-8 Rex-3, Double 2-8, Nikon 200 f/4, CP single system record/monitor head, 2 16mm Mitchell 400′ mags, misc. editing gear. Will sell as package or separate items. Also: Cinemonta 720C 16mm 6-plate, mint condition, $13,500. Contact: Clifford, (415) 444-3074, CA.

● *FOR RENT:* Broadcast gear: Ikegami HL83, BVU 110 w/time code, Betacams, Sachtler tripods, & experienced crew. Lisa, (212) 825-8696 or (212) 267-8221, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* 35 sealed 400′ rolls, Eastman Kodak 7247 negative raw stock (stored in freezer); Eclair ACL 200′. (914) 452-5807, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* IBM Selectric typewriter. (212) 666-6787, NY & leave message.

● *FOR RENT:* JVC/KY 2700 camera package, w/ crew & car. $350/day. ¾″ postproduction. Complete production packages from idea to finished product. Erik Lewis Productions, (718) 851-8672, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Arri 11-C package. Variable-speed motor, 7 mags (400′ & 200′), sharp lenses, lens shade w/ filter holders, filters, orig. cases, Nicad batteries & chargers, original Arri tripod w/ long legs & baby legs, mint condition. 16mm camera, both single system & double system w/ Nagra. 2 400′ mags, 12-120 Angenieux zoom, batt. & AC. Nagra III w/ many additional factory-made features, *e.g.* built-in mics for slates. Many accessories & adaptors. Sony 1640 video camera in case, Sony VO 4800 deck, mint condition. Best offer. Omni Tota-light kit w/ lights, ext. cables, 2 sunguns. Many, P.O. Box 74, NY, NY 10025-0074, (212) 662-5364.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony VO-1800 ¾″ player recorder. Perfect working condition. $500 firm. Debra Goldman, M-F, 10am-5pm, (212) 473-3400 or (718) 784-4919, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Refitted tripod w/ gyroscopic head, wooden legs, spreader & handle. Ideal for heavier-type film cameras. $285. (212) 874-0132, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony M3, 3-5 tube video camera w/ Canon 15x lens, 3 batteries, used approx. 50 hrs., Sony VO 4800 recorder w/BVU modification. Both mint cond., $7900. Also Jr. Pro fluid head tripod, $375; BV 644 super cardioid mic, $125. *For rent:* Sony M3 & 4800, $200/day w/ technician. Eclair ACL 16mm camera & cinematographer, $200/day. Marita Simpson, (212) 982-6054, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Canon Scopic 16MS camera w/ 12.5 mm to 75mm zoom, auto-exposure, macro & single frame, like new. $1500 or best offer. Ron, (617) 787-7209 (days) or (617) 527-5276 (eves.), MA.

● *FOR SALE:* 1968 Steenbeck w/ audio modifications. Very good condition, reasonably priced. Gale, (212) 966-4600, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Oxberry animation table stand model LC-3 w/ motorized extension dual bars model; 16mm camera, lights, Acme registration punch. Completely ready for use, $11,995. 16mm Auricon Super 1200 camera, TVT shutter, Filmagnetic; 17-85 Pan Cinor lens, 1200′ mag. Complete, $1295. D4 Film Studios, (617) 444-0226, MA.

● *FOR SALE:* JVC KY-1900U portable 3-tube procolor video camera w/ 10X servo zoom lens HZ-2100U; AC adaptor, 2 DC-C19 batteries. Excellent condition, $2995 firm. (201) 721-4067, NJ.

● *FOR SALE:* ¾″ edit system w/ Sony 2260 player, 2860A recorder & RM430 control unit, $3000. (516) 498-9000, NY.

Conferences ● Workshops

● *PROFESSIONAL VIDEO SEMINARS:* Directing, scripting, special effects, postproduction, management & interactive disc applications. Philadelphia, Westin Bellevue-Stratford, June 18-21; Chicago, McCormick Center, July 9-12; Houston, Westin Galleria, Aug. 13-16. North American Television Institute, Knowledge Industry Publications, 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY, 10604, (914) 328-9156.

● *CHILDREN'S MEDIA:* Pre-American Film Festival conference on Developments in Children's Media. Sessions on adapting children's literature to the screen, conception & packaging of the *Reading Rainbow* series, children's media research and ½″ video distribution & use. Mon., May 27 at the Roosevelt Hotel, NYC. Admission to conference & luncheon: $100 if you register before May 13, $125 at the door. Contact: American Film Festival, 45 John St., NYC 10038, (212) 227-5599.

● *COMPUTER GRAPHICS WORKSHOPS* on Time Arts Lumena System offer by 185 Corporation Stand-By program and Video Computer Animation Workshop. 1-day introductory seminar offered on weekends, every 6 weeks, $60. Prerequisite for intensive hands-on individualized workshop, $250. 185 Corporation, Stand-By Program, 1923 Cadman Plaza Sta., Brooklyn, NY 11202, (718) 768-3334,

● *SUMMER VIDEO PRODUCTION WORKSHOPS* offered by the School of Graduate & Continuing Education, Fairfield University. 2 intro workshops, July 8-12; 2 intermediate workshops, July 15-19. Sessions are 9am-5pm daily w/ screenings & editing nightly. Tuition: $495 per workshop, and $450 for those continuing from intro to intermediate program. Lab fee: $25/course. Full room & board, $180/week. Submit applications w/non-refundable $15 fee. Contact: School of Graduate & Continuing Education, (203) 255-5411, ext. 2249, CT.

● *ASIAN AMERICAN MEDIA:* National Conference sponsored by the National Asian American Telecommunications Assn. Panels & workshops on aesthetics, nuts & bolts issues, advocacy. Presentation of Steve Tatsukawa Memorial Award. July 26-28 at the University of California, LA. NAATA, 346-9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 863-0814.

● *GREGORY BATESON AND THE PATTERN THAT CONNECTS:* Symposium on Art and Ecology. 3 NY artists Frank Gillette, Paul Ryan &

critic Lucy Lippard, will explore work of Gregory Bateson through presentations & discussion of their own work in order to understand art as essential to ecological culture. Sat., May 25, 10am–5pm, $15. Contact: Jocelyn Turner, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, W. 111 St. at Amsterdam Ave., NY NY, (212) 678-6888.

● *THE DOCUMENTARY IN CRISIS:* Roundtable discussion sponsored by Film Arts Foundation & Assoc. of Cal. Independent Public Television Producers in San Francisco, Sun., May 19. Producers, PTV reps & critics will speak. For more info: Cathy Phoenix, FAF, 346 9th St, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

Editing Facilities

● *STEENBECKS FOR RENT:* 8 & 6-plate. Delivered to your workspace. Reasonable rates by the month. Octavio, (718) 855-8366, NY.

● *¾" EDITING:* JVC 8250 w/ convergence controller, $20/hr. Discounts for long-term projects. On Track Video, (212) 864-5166, NY.

● *16MM EDITING & POSTPRODUCTION* in sunny Oakland. 6-plate unAmerican flatbed, 2 fully-equipped benches & motorized sync; adjacent transfers, projection, narration recording & free parking. 24-hr. access. BAVC, FAF & AIVF discounts. (415) 436-6978.

● *NEW HORIZONS STUDIOS:* Off-line editing in comfortable surroundings at award-winning production house. Convenient midtown location. Includes Tapehandlers w/ new RM866U, TBC, 3M proc, waveform, Ikegami title camera, CG, 16-ch. audio mixing. JVC KM 2000 SEG, chroma key, $90/hr. (212) 490-9082, NY.

● *NEGATIVE MATCHING:* 16mm, Super 16mm, 35mm A&B rolls cut for regular answer & release printing, 16mm–35mm blow-ups, direct negative to tape transfer. Reasonable rates. References available. One White Glove, Tim Grennan, (718) 897-4145, NY.

● *FOR RENT:* 6-plate Steenbeck editing room. Fully equipped incl. telephone. Special rates for independents. Bob Mack Prods., (212) 736-3074, NY.

● *SAN FRANCISCO ¾" EDITING:* Sony Type 5 system, Beta & VHS dubbing. $15/hr. self-service; $25/hr. w/ operator. By appointment: Mermaid Productions, affiliate of EZTV, (415) 777-3105, SF.

● *EDITING ROOM:* ¾" and VHS-to-¾" w/ Convergence Super 90, tapehandlers, Adda TBC, time code reader-generator, fades, overdubs. New equipment. Lincoln Center area. $20/hr. during business hrs. for AIVF members editing noncommercial projects. Also available: editors, scripting, Chyron. Hank Domatch, TV Enterprises, (212) 874-5424, NY.

● *¾" VIDEO EDITING* w/ new Sony 5850 decks & RM 440 controller. Also ¾", VHS & Beta dupes. Editing, $15/hr.; $10/hr. Tape stock available. Video Deal Productions, (212) 254-3298, NY.

Films ● Tapes Wanted

● *JEWISH FILM FOUNDATION* seeks documentary or fictional films/videos on Jewish subject matter for PBS series. Length open. Also, foundation's new distribution cooperative seeks independently-produced films/videos for all markets. Mimi Rosenbush or Beverly Siegel, 6025 N. Christiana, Chicago, IL 60659, (312) 478-9290.

● *NEW DAY FILM COOPERATIVE* seeks new films about social change made by filmmakers interested in self-distribution. National film coop w/ over 50 award-winning films. New Day Central, Attn: James Daigle, 853 Broadway, Rm. 1210, NYC 10003, (212) 477-4604; contact by May 15.

● *MEDIA ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT:* Info on films, videotapes & slideshows for inclusion in an environmental media guide to be published later this year by Media Network & Environmental Action. Martha Wallner, (212) 620-0878, NY.

● *SHORT FILMS:* For preview to AV-oriented people from foreign countries at the International Center in New York. Send promotional literature to: Sol Rubin, Coordinator, Meet the Filmmaker Series, P.O. Box 40, NYC 10038.

● *INDEPENDENT SCIENCE FILMS:* France's new national science museum, Parc de la Villette, is looking for 16mm non-commercial, independent films & tapes. Subjects: natural & environmental sciences, transportation, energy, agriculture, animal life, industry; current or historical. Museum will open in 1986. Emma Cohn, 2827 Valentine Ave., Bronx, NY 10458.

● *VIDEO WOMEN* magazine format cable access series on Pittsburgh's Channel 21 showcases films & tapes by, &/or about women. Send description of work, running time, & publicity materials, indicating the mininum compensation you require for cablecasting work 4–10 times during 2-week period. Channel 21 reachs about 75,000 homes. c/o Access Video, 1150 Greenfield Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

● *SAN FRANCISCO MIME TROUPE FOOTAGE SEARCH:* Archival film, video, Super-8, photos & related memorabilia of the group from 1960s to the present needed for independent feature documentary. Especially interested in performance, demonstrations, & cultural/political life of San Francisco Bay Area during the '60s. Glenn Silber, Catalyst Media, 1838 N. Mariposa Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 668-2545 or (213) 667-0795.

● *HOME VIDEO DISTRIBUTION:* VideoTrek Productions seeks full-length independent film & videos for distribution to home video stores, including features, documentaries, etc. Kevin Bender, 386 Grand Ave., Oakland, CA 94610.

Freelancers

● *VIDEOGRAPHER EX-DANCER:* Specializing in documentation of & collaboration on dance projects. ¾" or ½" production, color camera. Performance: $150; rehearsal: $100 (excluding tape). Penny Ward Video, (212) 228-1427, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER:* W/ 16 & Super-16 Aaton package, available for low-budget high quality 16 & 35mm features. Igor, (212) 794-2011, NY.

● *RESEARCH & WRITING:* For quality work on documentary or fiction films. Janet Wickenhaver, 700 Grand St., Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201) 792-5047.

● *COMPOSER SEEKS FILM & VIDEO PROJECTS:* Professional musician w/ 20 yrs. experience looking for filmmakers who need music composed for their projects. Have performed for *Mommie Dearest, Hair, Atomic Artist,* performed with Leonard Bernstein, Michael Franks, Noel Pointer. Rick Cutler, (212) 246-1154, NY.

● *EXPERIENCED RESEARCHER/SCRIPTWRITER:* Looking for projects. Have worked on anthropological ventures, researched Native Americans in Manhattan & presently writing musical play. Ability in Spanish. Gwynne Vernet, 423 Broome St., NYC 10013, (212) 925-4114.

● *SCRIPT SUPERVISOR/CONTINUITY:* Available for independent shorts & features. Valero, (212) 228-8756, NY.

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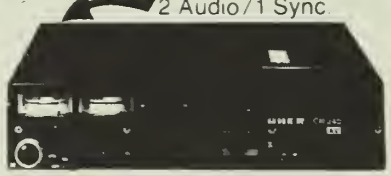
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● *EXPERIENCED CREW MEMBER:* Interested in feature/dramatic projects. Have worked electric on 2 features. PA on 1 & numerous tape projects (¾" & 1"). Joseph C. D'Allessandro Freelance Production Services, 124 Albermarle St., Rochester, NY 14613, (716) 254-8332.

● *PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/CAMERMAN:* 17 years experience in films, video & TV. Shooting in Europe (mainly Germany) this spring & summer, I will have time for more assignments. Returning late summer. Documentaries, industrials, medical films. Many, PO Box 74, NYC 10025-0074, (212) 662-5364.

● *PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/CAMERAMAN:* Ikegami 77. Production of your corporate/organization documentary. $350/day. References on request for local & syndicated cablecasts. P. Greg Alland, (212) 420-0953, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER AVAILABLE* w/ Arri 16SR, fast lenses & lights. Fluent in French & Spanish. Negotiable rates: Pedro Bonilla, (213) 454-8909, CA.

● *AWARD-WINNING FILM/VIDEO CAMERAMAN* w/ loaded 16mm Aaton available for documentary, dramatic & conceptual assignments. John Bishop, 917 E. Broadway, Haverhill, MA 01830, (617) 372-0458.

● *ACTRESS FOR VO'S/TRANSLATION:* 1 can translate, dub, or do narration. Spanish to English sample tape available of work done for Ministry of Education of Nicaragua. Spanish & French. R. Pikser, (212) 222-0865, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER* available w/ CP-16 and Arri 16BL packages: Nagra w/ mics, light kit, 6-plate editing console & mini-van for camera crew. Reasonable rates & special rates for documentaries. Bilingual English, Italian & some Spanish. Renato Tonelli, (718) 236-0153, NY.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER* w/ new Sony DXC-M3 & broadcast gear ready to shoot news, documentary, dance & other subjects. Full ENG package & crew as needed. Rates negotiable. L. Goodsmith, (212) 989-8156, NY.

● *FILM COMPOSER* available. Experienced in all musical styles. Audio & video cassette samples available on request. Tony Salvata, (718) 788-2602, NY.

Opportunities ● Gigs

● *FILM/VIDEO GRAD* seeks partner/producer to form independent music/video production company. (718) 225-0564, NY.

● *CAMERA CREW* w/ ¾" gear looking for film gaffer interested in developing video lighting skills. Paid & spec work. Send resume to: Imagelink Productions, 355 W. 85th St. Apt 61, NYC 10024.

● *DOCUMENTARY PRODUCER WANTED:* For documentary series *The Moore Report,* produced by WCCO-TV, the Minneapolis CBS affiliate. Needs producer w/ good track record to produce 2 1-hr. documentaries/year on staff at WCCO. Bob Thurber or Mike Sullivan, WCCO Television, 11th on the Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55403, (612) 330-2400.

● *WRITER WANTED:* To rewrite action/detective film script on spec. Producer & director interested in project. Melvin Stephens, 4100 College Heights Dr., University Park, MD 20782, (301) 779-1076.

● *WANTED:* Affordable, low-priced New York studio to tape *The Scott & Gary Show.* We feature great bands & attempts at great comedy, w/ cult cable following growing in NY, SF, Boston, DC, MD & OH. Prefer evening & weekend sessions, & are willing to give you "Recorded at..." credit. Deborah Erickson, (212) 473-3400 (days) or Scott Lewis (718) 339-8145 (eves.), NY.

Publications

● *SOCIAL ISSUE MEDIA:* Publications available from Media Network include Guide to Disarmament Media (plus update), Films on Central America, Films on Reproductive Rights, Community Media, Films on Adoption, & Mobilizing Media; the 1984 Nat'l Directory of A-V Resources on Nuclear War & the Arms Race, Reel Change, In Focus, Taping It Together video manual for community groups, & Gray Panther & labor-related media guides. Media Network, 208 W. 13th St., NYC 10011, (212) 620-0877.

● *BURDEN OF DREAMS: THE BOOK* by Les Blank & Maureen Gosling. Screenplays, journals, reviews & photos from Blank's film about Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo.* 330 pages, 70 photos. $12.95 (paper). Les Blank, 10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530.

● *1985 VIDEO COPYRIGHT SEMINAR:* Recordings of 1-day seminar conducted by Ken Winslow & Jerome K. Miller. Covers educators' rights to show videocassettes, pitfalls of screening in libraries & dorms, legal problems in taping from satellites, recent developments in video technology, directory to low-cost video distributors, & institutional copyright policy outline. $39 plus $1.50 shiping & handling. Copyright Information Services, 440 Tucker Ave., Suite D, Friday Harbor, WA 98250.

● *SPIRAL #3:* The quarterly publication devoted to independent film announces the publication of its next issue as a 60-minute audio cassette tape. Features a variety of creative experimentation by filmmakers, including music & soundtracks, interviews. First-time anthology of audio works by independent filmmakers. Limited edition, available April 1. $6 postpaid. Subscriptions: $15 (1 year, 4 issues), $20 for institutions & foreign. Spiral, PO Box 5603, Pasadena, CA 91107, (818) 358-6255.

Resources ● Funds

● *16MM NEGATIVE MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut at reasonable rates. Bruce Kubert, (212) 228-7352, NY.

● *THIRD WORLD PRODUCERS PROJECT:* Film News Now Foundation provides consulting services in production/postproduction, budgeting, fundraising, exhibition, distribution & promotion. Also offers fiscal sponsorship. Interested in producers working on social issue & innovative video/film projects. Chris Choy or Renee Tajima, Film News Now Foundation, c/o 160 Fifth Ave., Rm, 911, NYC 10010, (212) 243-2310.

● *KIND & REASONABLE MOVING COMPANY:* PA w/ van, $175/day. Weekly & hourly rates available. Household, airport, commercial. (212) 929-3570, NY.

● *ATTENTION WRITERS:* Are you seeking evaluations, sales, developments deals, or agency representations? For free info, contact: Flaming Rose Productions, 770 Princeton Ave., Metedeconk, NJ 08724, (201) 892-5552.

● *INDIEFEX:* Sound EFX, foleys & dubbing at new lower rates for independents. Expanded postproduction services. 10% discount for A1VF members. Randal Alan Goya, 949 Amsterdam Ave., #4N, NYC 10025, (212) 678-7989.

● *PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY:* Judith Smith, C.S.W., offers individual & group counseling to independent artists & freelancers. Highly trained w/ years of experience. Specializes in problems arising in interpersonal relationships, artistic careers &

rearing of young children. Some reduced rates for AIVF members. Village Area. (212) 691-6695, NY.

● *MULTI-MEDIA CONSULTING SERVICES:* Theater, film & video. Coordination of fundraising proposals, consultation, scripts & resume writing. Production planning: budgets/spread sheets, revenue projections. Computer graphic services (drafting, AutoCad, instruction), wordprocessing. Staff w/ 20-plus yrs. experience in all media. S.S.C.S., PO Box 2426, Westport, CT 06880, (203) 222-7433.

● *AFI INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER PROGRAM:* 1986 grant cycle applications available after July 15. Deadline: September 13. The Independent Filmmaker Program, c/o American Film Institute, 2021 N. Western Ave., PO Box 27999, Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 856-7696.

● *KEY LIGHT PRODUCTIONS:* Provides complete production services, from project development & shooting through editing. Full support staff, including field producers, writers, researches, PAs & broadcast location crew. Beth, (212) 581-9748, NY.

Trims ● Glitches

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to James Irwin, whose film *Its Frame of Mind* was presented as part of a special program at the 6th Quebec International Super 8 Film Festival in Montreal, Canada last February.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to AIVF members whose works have been chosen for the *Independent Focus* series on WNET-New York: Diane Orr & C. Larry Roberts, *SL-1;* Ross Spears, *The Electric Valley;* Peter Schnall, *The Real Thing;* Don North, *Guazapa;* Pedro Rivera & Susan Zeig, *Manos A La Obra: The Story of Operation Bootstrap;* Glenn Silber & Claudia Vianello, *How Far Home: Veterans from Vietnam & Atomic Artist;* Michelle Citron, *What You Take for Granted;* Jean de Segonzac, *White Oak Goes Black;* Erik Lewis, *Story of Gentrification;* Jaime Hellman, *Made for TV;* Ronald Gray & Kathleen Collins, *Losing Ground;* Nancy Gold, *The Lady Sings;* Peter Wallach, *Raygun's Nightmare;* Judy Filere, *Ms. Universe;* Flip Johnson, *The Roar from Within;* Max Almy, *Perfect Leader;* Skip Blumberg, *Music for Bicycle Orchestra;* J.T. Takagi, *Community Plot;* Babette Mangolte, *The Sky on Location.* The 13-week series begins Sun. April 17.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to AIVF members who have been awarded grants from the American Film Institute's Independent Filmmaker Program: Dan Curry & Kimberly Loughlin for *Southern Ballet;* Pablo Frasconi for *Survival of a Small City;* Drew Klausner for an experimental animation piece; Mary Lucier for *Aviatrix;* Kent Moorhead for *The Diamond King;* Steven Okazaki for *Paper Hearts;* Steven Palfi for *Junebug Jabbo Jones: A Video Drama;* & Meri Weingarten for *Take Back the Night.* 14 grants, totalling $245,000, were awarded.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Fred Baca, who was awarded a special merit award cash prize of 30,000 yen for his video *The 10 Minute Bob Show* at the 7th Tokyo Video Festival.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Curtis Choy for winning first prize last Feb. at the Big Muddy Film Festival for his film *The Fall of the I-Hotel.*

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to AIVF members who have been awarded grants from the Midwest Regional Fellowship Program: Dan Curry & Kimberley Loughlin for *Southern Ballet;* Homero de la Cruz for *Migrant Family;* Tom Hayes for *Native Sons;* John T. Caldwell for a video triology of foreign cultures; Mary Filice for *No Place Like Home;* & Miroslaw Rogala for *Faces: Outerpretation.*

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Marjorie Leopold, Brooklyn, NY for her donation.

FREE DANCE TIX

AIVF needs volunteers to work with staff on our tenth anniversary celebration, June 4, 1985. Volunteers will receive free tickets to the celebration's buffet/dance, to be held at a leading New York club. Call Larry Sapadin, (212) 473-3400, before May 21.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Richard Schmiechen and Robert Epstein, whose *The Times of Harvey Milk* won the Academy Award for best documentary film. And to Marjory Hunt and Paul Wagner, directors of *The Stone Carvers*, which took the Oscar for best short documentary.

MAY FIVF SEMINARS

MAKING IT: THE BUSINESS OF FILM

A Three-Part Series
Local 1199, 310 W. 43rd St., 7:30 to 10:00 p.m.

GETTING THE MONEY: FILM FINANCING

Thursday, May 16
Trends in grant funding, "hybrid" financing, legal issues in limited partnerships, headhunting.

GETTING IT MADE: THE UNIONS

Wednesday, May 22
Representatives from film unions explain low-budget production policies.

GETTING IT OUT: DISTRIBUTION

Thursday, May 30
Distribution strategies, working with a distributor, promotion and publicity, self-distribution, booking.

SERIES ADMISSION: $40 AIVF member with card, $55 non-members
INDIVIDUAL SEMINAR ADMISSION (depending on availability): $18 AIVF members, $22 non-members
For more information, call Debra Goldman at FIVF: (212) 473-3400.



Plans for the 10th Anniversary Celebration are in full swing. Mark June 4, 1985 on your calendar. That's the day when AIVF members, supporters and friends will gather to mark this milestone in our history. The presentation of the INDIE Awards and the premiere screening of a compilation tape of members' work will take place at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, followed by a dance at another location. Watch your mailbox for more details.

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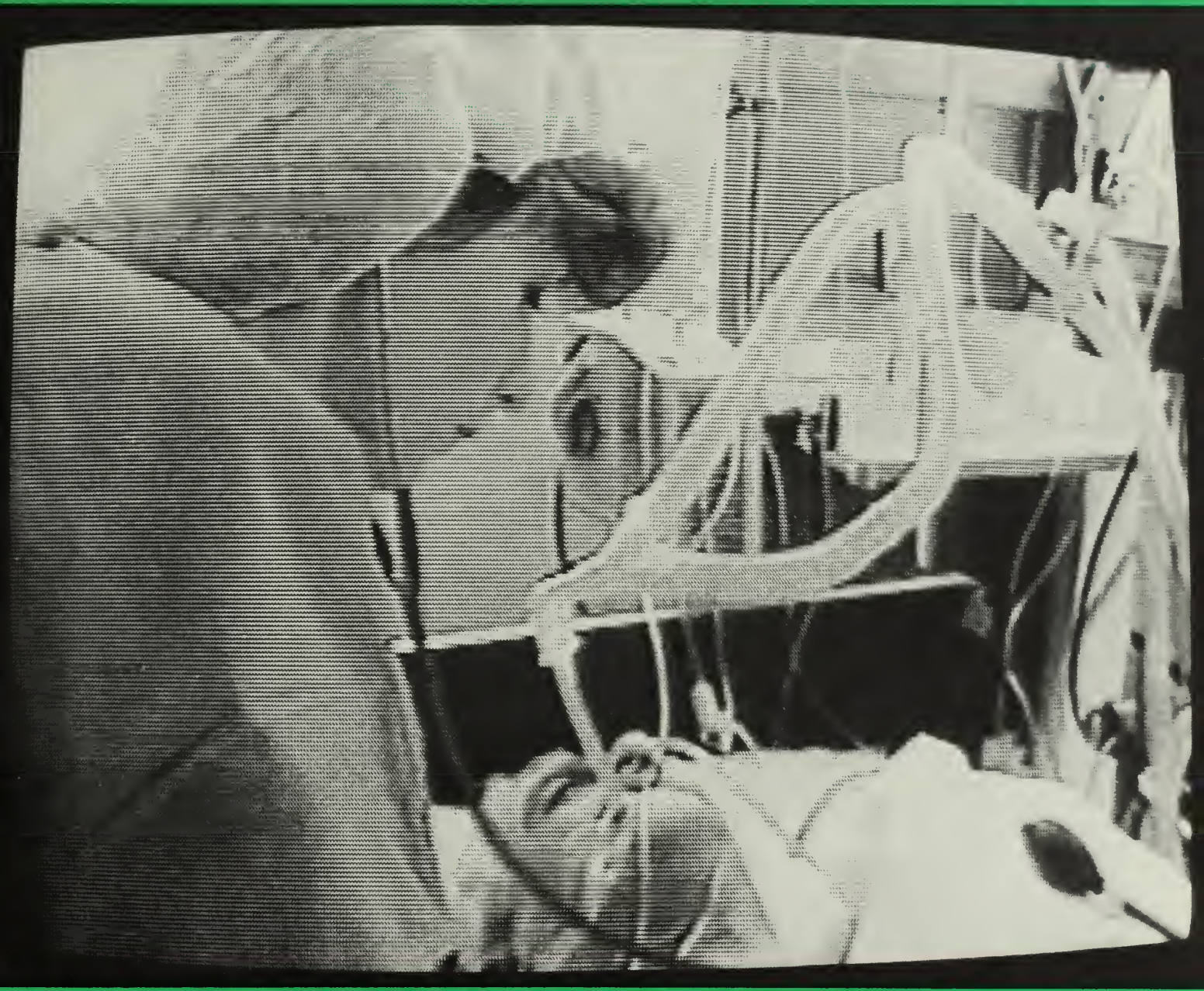
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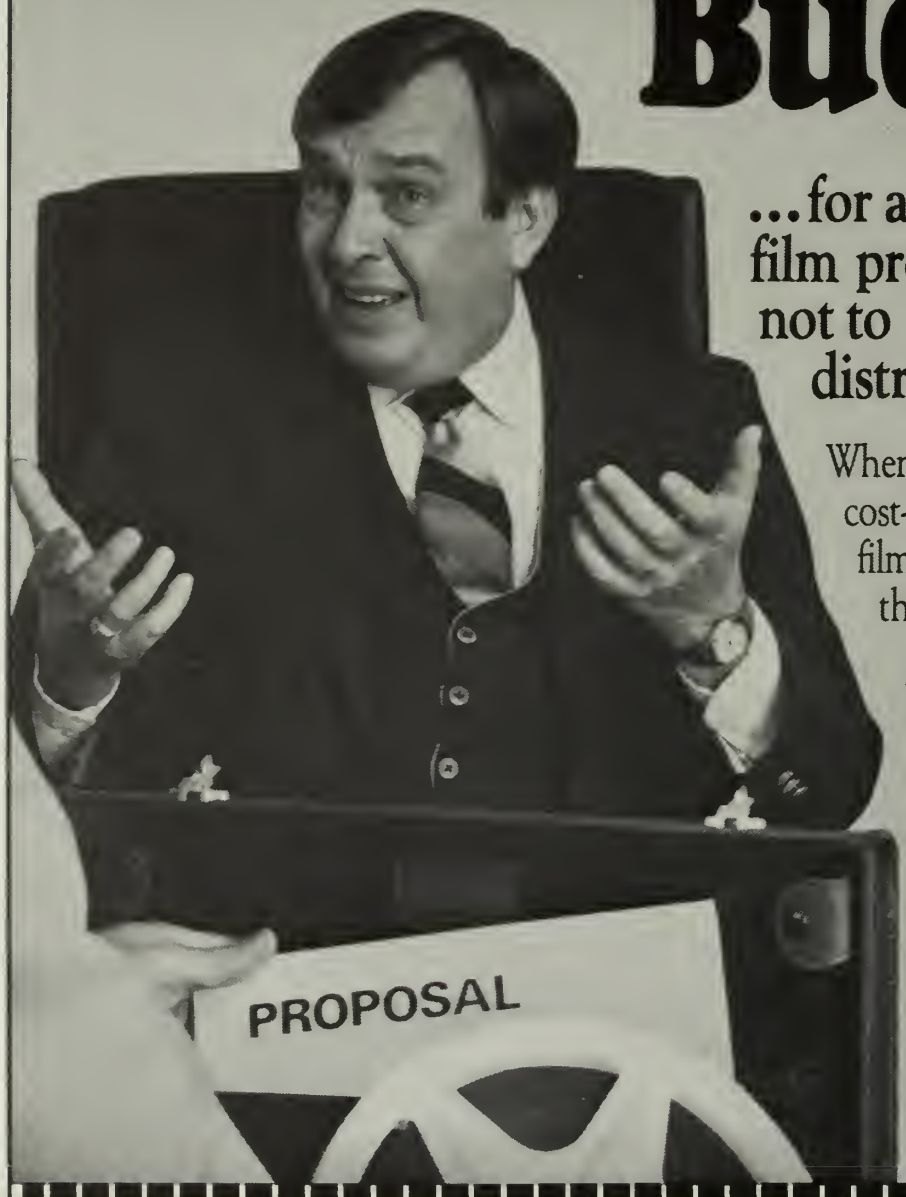


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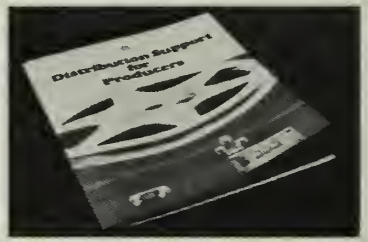
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FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT

JUNE 1985
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 5

Publisher: Lawrence Sapadin
Editor: Martha Gever
Associate Editors: Susan Linfield
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Art Director: Bethany Eden Jacobson
Advertising: Barbara Spence; Marionette, Inc. (718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBoer 113 E. Center St., Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeezo Typography
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a not-for-profit, tax-exempt educational foundation dedicated to the promotion of video and film, and by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc. (AIVF), the national trade association of independent producers and individuals involved in independent video and film. Subscription is included with membership in AIVF. Together, FIVF and AIVF provide a broad range of educational and professional services for independents and the general public. Publication of **The Independent** is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

The Independent welcomes unsolicited manuscripts. Manuscripts cannot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included. No responsibility is assumed for loss or damage.

Letters to **The Independent** should be addressed to the editor. Letters may be edited for length.

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COVER: The revolution may be televised after all–at least on your home VCR. Progressive videomakers like Tami Gold and Lyn Goldfarb, who produced the tape "From Bedside to Bargaining Table," now relay their organizing messages through home cassettes.
Photo: Tami Gold and Lyn Goldfarb

LETTERS

To the editor:

When Lucinda Furlong writes that the broadcast standard is ever-changing and that artists are at its mercy ["Getting High Tech: The 'New Television,'" March 1985], she seems to ignore the evolutionary forces that brought us chisels and oil paint. The broadcast standard is progressing, predictably, toward the impossible goal of perfect video. The "eyeball factor" is more a measure of the current grammar in a rapidly developing language than any whim or caprice. That artists want and need to experiment with the tools of the medium is natural. That they want to reach as many people as possible is also natural. That tools are changing rapidly and costs are spiralling is also a normal part of social evolution.

The broadcast industry has enabled the development of virtually every new tool since the wire recorder, and made them available to anyone who can use them to make new and interesting work. Dean Winkler and John Sanborn's *Act III* offers evidence of the desire of the video service industry to stretch the potential of their investments. To stay on the leading edge of video technology while maintaining a viable business is a tricky challenge.

As someone working in the medium, I am glad that the industry has invented computerized editing and digital manipulation. The broadcast business has created an environment where projects that 10 years ago would have required superhuman politicking and grant-begging are now relatively simple and cheap.

Furlong's assertion that this evolution has made video less accessible is only true for those people who buy equipment. Rental prices for better quality equipment are falling, often dramatically. Most production houses find that the competitive nature of their business forces them to consider alternative arrangements with their clients in order to find new markets for their services. This makes state-of-the-art quality available to creative and persistent artists. I have found business and marketing people more reasonable and cooperative and likely to seek mutually beneficial arrangements than government bureaucrats.

In the end, the question of elitist or populist media is moot—as are debates over crude or slick, cheap or expensive. The "name of the game" is creative personal expression. The extent to which each of us makes the effort to make our expressions available is a question of how we spend our most valuable resource: ourselves.

As for "changing television," the home cassette market is the current frontier, which exists because of the investments of the broadcast market and its suppliers and the market economics that support technological evolution. It is available to all of us who choose to get involved. Whether we are producing sensitive documents of human suffering or instructional tapes for rock-and-roll guitar, high tech is creating more choices and more options for all of us.

—Patrick Gregston
Mar Vista, CA

Lucinda Furlong replies:

One of my purposes in writing about the "new television" was to show how much of the rhetoric on this subject is rife with contradictions and cannot sustain close scrutiny. However, Gregston's letter raises other issues that need to be addressed. He implies that to criticize the broadcast industry is to bite the hand that feeds. How dare artists be so ungrateful?

How can Gregston be so uncritical? His defense of the industry is based on a determinist view that technology is a neutral force unto itself that develops in a linear, natural way, creating new and better opportunities for everyone. This concept of technological progress as liberatory ignores the fact that the broadcast industry is entirely undemocratic. To say that this industry, in its beneficence, has made "virtually every tool" available to any creative person is simply untrue. The promise and subsequent betrayal of public access cable TV provides proof.

Finally, I never said that video technology has become less accessible as it has improved. My point was that, no matter what the state-of-the-art might be at any given time, access to it always remains just beyond reach.



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CABLE IN THE COURTOOM: FIRST AMENDMENT ARGUED IN L.A. AND MIAMI

"KEY COURT RULING BACKS FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS FOR CABLE TV OPERATORS," trumpeted the headline of the cable industry trade weekly *Multi-Channel News*. "CABLE CLAIMS FIRST AMENDMENT VICTORY," declared *Broadcasting* magazine. The occasion for this jubilation was a March 1 decision by a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in a case that pitted a cable operator, Preferred Communications, against the City of Los Angeles. Preferred sued the city, challenging its right to grant an exclusive franchise, and the judges unanimously decided that the city cannot deny a cable system access to public facilities which can accommodate it. To do so, the court ruled, would violate the First Amendment. The panel thus overturned a lower court decision to dismiss the suit.

The magic words "First Amendment" triggered a flurry of self-congratulatory press releases from the industry, all echoing James Mooney, president of the National Cable Television Association, who declared that the decision "is yet another nail in the coffin of cable regulation." Particularly ecstatic was Preferred's California law firm, Farrow, Schildhaus, Wilson & Rains, which, over the past few years, has collected some tidy fees from a nationwide roster of cable clients who have challenged municipal franchising authorities. The Los Angeles decision is the first time the firm's First Amendment argument hit paydirt, and the lawyers quickly claimed that they had dealt a mortal blow to franchise regulation.

"The cable industry is making far, far too much of this case," countered Michael Meyerson, professor of communications law at the University of Baltimore. "I think the cable industry will wake up and find that the Los Angeles decision will cause more problems than it solves."

In the decision, restricting access to public facilities was compared "to allowing the government discretion to grant permits for the operation of newspaper vending machines located on public streets only to the newspaper that 'best' serves the community, a practice we find clearly invalid." While this analogy was particularly sweet music to the ears of the cable operators, who have sought full First Amendment rights as owners of "electronic newspapers," Meyerson believes the remark fell far short of legally substantiating the industry's hopes. "Most of the discussion treated cable differently [from newspapers]," he said. "This decision may mean that two cable companies will be able to compete in the same area. But it doesn't mean the city doesn't have the right to regulate two cable companies."

The panel did address the larger regulatory question in a footnote to its 42-page decision. While the court claimed that franchising requirements, as called for in last year's Cable Telecommunications Act, "pose particularly troublesome constitutional questions," it explicitly declined to decide those questions. This refusal, argued Thomas Rogers, counsel to the House telecommunications subcommittee, may have strengthened the legitimacy of franchise requirements "because the court had every opportunity to strike them down and didn't."

The precise character of the court's ruling has been obscured by the industry ballyhoo. The panel ruled solely on whether Preferred's lawsuit against Los Angeles should go to trial. Much of the city's argument was not admissible in this appeal action. "We are not devastated by this," said Edward Perez, the deputy city attorney who tried the case for Los Angeles. "It's not a sweeping victory, as the cable industry is claiming." City officials felt strongly that in a trial, Los Angeles's franchising authority would be vindicated. The city now has three options: to appeal the case before a full panel of Ninth Circuit judges, to appeal directly to the U.S. Supreme Court, or to try the case in district court.

Three weeks after the Ninth Circuit decision in California, the Eleventh Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals upheld a lower court decision which had struck down a Miami ordinance regulating transmission of "indecent material" on cable. The case was brought against Miami by a consumer who wanted to subscribe to the Playboy Channel. Again, industry representatives claimed the ruling as a victory. Said John Redpath, senior vice-president and general counsel of Home Box Office, "We are extremely gratified that a unanimous court of appeals agrees with us that cable television is entitled to full First Amendment rights."

In the Miami decision, the court asserted that cable was distinct from broadcast. It ruled that a U.S. Supreme Court decision that the content of a broadcast could, under certain circumstances, be regulated, did not apply to cable. The Supreme Court had argued that because broadcast is a "pervasive" medium, which intrudes on the privacy of home and property, the FCC could impose sanctions on those stations sending "offensive" language over the airwaves. But the Miami panel argued that cable was not pervasive in the same way: a consumer "must affirmatively select to have cable service come into his home" and "must make a monthly decision whether to continue to subscribe to cable."

In contrast to the Los Angeles case, Meyerson has no quarrel with the outcome of the Miami decision, noting, "I think it's in the public interest to have the minimum amount of censorship in cable." He also welcomed drawing a distinction between cable and broadcast. In the past, Meyerson admitted, public interest theorists used the principles of broadcast regulation as a justification for cable regulation. But he said the "new wave of public interest thinking" on the subject claims that cable "is not like broadcast and it's not like newspapers. It's a little like a telephone and a lot like itself." According to this argument, the First Amendment questions surrounding cable should be determined not by analogy, but through an analysis of the unique nature of the cable medium. No court has ruled decisively on this larger question. "These cases are just skirmishes," Meyerson insisted; the big battles, to be fought on Supreme Court turf, are still to come. —*Debra Goldman*

. . . AND ACCESS UPHELD IN RHODE ISLAND

So you thought the regulation questions surrounding cable were settled when Congress passed the Cable Telecommunications Act last year? You believed that the cable industry meant it when its representatives said they wanted clarification of the rules of the game so they could conduct their business in a more orderly fashion? As the courtroom dramas in Los Angeles and Miami [see above] demonstrate, the battle over wire rights continues. Not every legal decision, however, ends in a First Amendment triumph for the cable business.

In late February, the Supreme Court of Rhode Island ruled that the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities has statutory power to impose access requirements on the state's cable operators. Current DPU regulations require a minimum of seven government, educational, and public access channels on every 35-channel system. Another access channel must be added for every additional five channels provided by the operator. The case was brought three years ago by Berkshire Cablevision, a would-be franchise for Newport County. Although Berkshire raised the First Amendment flag, hoping these requirements would be dismissed as unconstitutional, and despite the lack of specific rules pro-

viding the DPU with authority in such matters, the court ruled that "regulations designed to prevent public harm through the exploitation of a monopoly medium clearly fall within this statutory authority." The word "monopoly" was greeted with as much glee by public interest advocates as the words "First Amendment" generate among cable operators.

The Rhode Island story, to be sure, did not make the front page of the cable trade press. And access supporters should be aware that this decision is no more definitive than the others that have come through the courts thus far. But this may be the case that determines the regulatory issue: it is expected to reach the Supreme Court. *—DG*

VIDEO DATA BANK'S STOCK EXCHANGE

In today's funding climate, which encourages the synergism of grant money and earned income, new programs and services are key to nonprofit institutions' survival. In Chicago, the Video Data Bank is definitely on a growth curve. Attached to the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Data Bank first made a name for itself as producer, collector, and distributor of the videotape interview series "On Art and Artists." In the last couple of years, the Data Bank enlarged its list to include experimental video art—with considerable financial success. This year it is expanding in two directions: absorbing into its collection video "classics," and venturing into the home cassette market.

For the video art classics, the Data Bank has struck a deal with Castelli/Sonnabend Tapes and Films, the New York art dealers who, in the late sixties, snared the work of established visual artists working in video, such as William Wegman, Bruce Nauman, Lynda Benglis, and Robert Rauschenberg. But illusions about the existence of collectors eager to buy tapes as "art objects" were quickly dispelled. The video distribution system that developed in the seventies grew into a far different enterprise from the art business, and Castelli/Sonnabend never quite mastered it. Most of their artists have long since dropped out of video. In addition, critics and historians eager to view this early work often had difficulties gaining access to it. And, over time, changing technology played tricks on the Castelli collection: the ½″ reel-to-reel equipment on which much of this pioneering work was recorded has become obsolete. Lucinda Furlong, curatorial assistant at the Whitney Museum's film and video department, says that "some of the ¾″ submasters we got from Castelli had technical problems—signal problems, drop out, glitches—but most older tapes have those kind of problems." The techniques for preserving these tapes on high quality masters exist, but they come with a high price tag.

When Lyn Blumenthal, co-director of the Data Bank, suggested that the Chicago center restore these tapes, the Castelli people were interested. The resulting arrangement gives the Data Bank exclusive, three-year distribution rights to 16 hours of tapes made from 1968–1973, including work by Nauman, Vito Acconci, Joan Jonas, Paul Kos, and Lawrence Weiner. The Data Bank will transfer the ½″ masters to 1″, "keeping the specs in alignment so they can eventually be transferred to disc," Blumenthal explained. The project's budget is $21,000; Blumenthal is seeking an $8,000 grant from the American Film Institute's National Center for Film and Video Preservation. Should this money materialize, the Data Bank plans to match it with earned income and funds from institutional coffers. "All normal distribution payments will be deferred until the costs have been covered," she explained. In addition to exclusive three-year rights to the restored tapes, the Data Bank will also distribute most of Castelli's remaining catalogue on a nonexclusive basis. The tapes will also continue to be available at Castelli/Sonnabend.

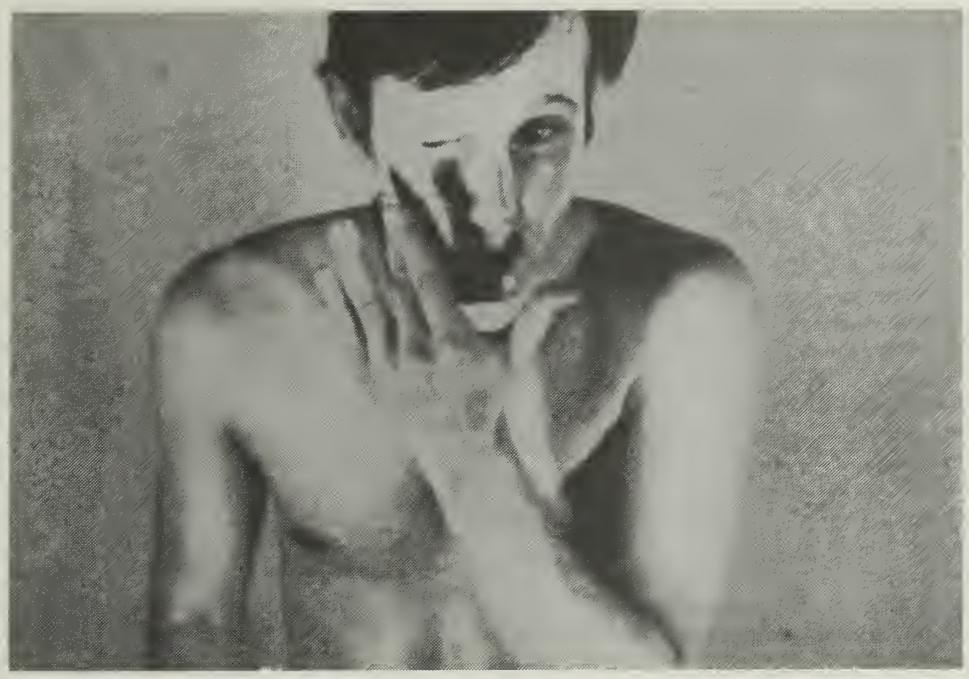
Even as the Data Bank is easing these video art oldies back into broader distribution, it is turning its attention to home video. Early this spring, the National Endowment for the Arts awarded the organization $10,000 to develop ½″ cassette packages for this booming market. Blumenthal hopes this seed money, which will pay for the early stages of developing an initial six-tape program, will ultimately yield an ongoing venture in "video publishing."

What, other than the physical transfer of tape from one format to another, turns art videotape into a home cassette? Blumenthal's answer is packaging. "There's no market for tapes *per se*," she said. The trick, she insists, is placing tapes into a broader program of interest to a targetable market. The first series slated for publication is tentatively titled, "What Does She Want?" "Individual tapes will not be the selling point. The series will cover a whole range of current women's issues: language and representation, sexuality, women's work." Data Bank plans an initial edition of 1,000 copies. "I *know* there are 1,000 people out there interested in collecting programs like this," Blumenthal says. "These tapes will not just fit tidily in the academic market, but will appeal to people who read *Ms.* magazine, to doctors and lawyers." Selections reflect this need to attract the disposable income set: alongside experimental video works, the package will emphasize less esoteric forms of information, such as interviews taken from the "On Art and Artists" tapes.

Video Data Bank will rely on direct sales; individual tapes will cost $60, with series subscribers getting six tapes for the price of five. There will be no rentals. The Data Bank has not ruled out the possibility of placing the series in video stores, but it is not yet ready to expend much effort on that approach. "I don't think there will be a market there until home video



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From Bruce Nauman's "Art Makeup No. 1, White," a Castelli tape that the Video Data Bank will restore and distribute.

Courtesy Castelli/Sonnabend

becomes much more specialized. There may be a New Video store selling art tapes in New York, but there isn't one in Akron, Ohio," Blumenthal said.

So far, the Data Bank has not yet signed contracts with the artists whose tapes will appear in the series. But, Blumenthal says, "Since individual works are not the selling point, each artist will receive equal points in the entire series." It will be published under the label First Generation Tapes, an entity which, if successful, eventually will be incorporated as a profit-making concern. The target date for the release of the women's series is January 1986, and a second series is on the drawing board for March of that year.

First Generation hopes to become the publisher of programs that originate outside the Data Bank. But Blumenthal is aware that all the market research in the world will not secure video publishing status as a going concern until "home video has an infrastructure, like the book publishing world or the movie world." Yet as Data Bank's venture into home casssette shows, the organization is betting on the future of video "literacy." —*DG*

MONDO CONDO

New York has devised a solution to the Manhattan space crunch for arts groups—help them move out of the area. Under the new Industrial Relocation and Retention Program, performing arts groups and visual artist working spaces qualify, along with industrial businesses, for a relocation incentive program. The IRR encourages groups to move from the city's gentrifying areas—below 96th Street in Manhattan, Long Island City, and the Fulton Ferry section of Brooklyn—to anywhere in Manhattan above 96th Street, or the outer boroughs. Organizations may be eligible for moving costs of up to $100,000 and leasehold improvements.

A number of arts groups *are* facing a move—more often a matter of necessity than choice. But for those with neighborhood ties, no amount of relocation reimbursements will do. "A group like ours—a community organization—can't just move," says Matt Seig, a member of Films Charas, which runs screenings in the once "undesirable" and now marketable Lower East Side of Manhattan. Is IRR an instrument of gentrification? "You can say that," says Pearl Bowser of Third World Newsreel, who has been researching a move for the organization in anticipation of rocketing rents. "Or you can say it's creating jobs and industries in other boroughs."

The City's Office of the Not-For-Profit Sector, which runs the IRR, provides other services to groups seeking to relocate or expand anywhere in New York City, such as a computerized Space Bank with listings of privately-owned space in all the boroughs, including excess space for subletting or sharing, and information on city-owned buildings, zoning, land use, and other regulations. It also helps arrange for low-cost financing for the acquisition and/or renovation of real estate and equipment, and assists groups in dealing with other government agencies.

City arts groups need all the help they can get to keep afloat—but they also need to stay anchored in the very neighborhoods they pioneered in building. —*Renee Tajima*

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SINO-CINEMA SUMMIT

Last April, on the road with the American Film Institute-sponsored national tour of China Film Week II, the People's Republic of China official delegation met with a group of Asian American independents in New York City's Chinatown. The meeting was arranged by the national committee on U.S.-China Relations and Apple TV, a local Chinese-language cable program. Members of the delegation, which included the film director Xie Fei and Chi Xi Dao, deputy director of the Shanghai Film Studio, wanted to know more about independent and Asian American filmmaking, of which they had surprisingly little knowledge, according to Nancy Tong of Apple—although they did know of Wayne Wang's *Chan Is Missing,* which has been broadcast over PRC state television.

China Film Week II is part of a bilateral exchange of five films from each country. However, U.S. entries, chosen by the Chinese themselves, are all studio-produced: *On Golden Pond, Coal Miner's Daughter, The Turning Point, Star Wars,* and *Kramer vs. Kramer.* Despite the close emotional ties many Asian American filmmakers have for post-revolutionary China, none of their works have made it to the mainland. The delegation did express interest in bringing a retrospective of Asian American films to China. If so, Asian American filmmakers who have, according to independent producer Yuet Fung Ho, targeted their works for a minority audience, may have a chance to reach an audience that is measured in the hundreds of millions. *—RT*

INDIE PIX TO CBS/FOX HOMEVID

CBS Fox/Video has acquired its first U.S. independent features, including Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger Than Paradise,* Gregory Nava's *El Norte,* and John Sayles's *The Brother from Another Planet.* Amos Poe's first studio film, *Alphabet City,* was also acquired. According to creative affairs director Leon Falk, the films were seen at festivals or private screenings and were picked up before their theatrical releases. CBS Fox will market the films under one of three lines—CBS Fox/Video, Key Video, or Playhouse Video—and will give them separate promotional campaigns. *—RT*

SAN JOSE STATION DEFUNDED

The Santa Clara County (California) Board of Education has dealt a serious financial blow to KTEH, the San Jose public television affiliate that has been notable for its substantial work with independent producers. Last February, in an attempt to balance its books, the board voted to cut $780,000 from KTEH's allocation—25



Jim Jarmusch's "Stranger Than Paradise" is one of the independent films picked up by CBS/Fox Home Video.
Courtesy Samuel Goldwyn

percent of the station's operating budget. The station responded with an emergency fundraising campaign that netted over $200,000 in one week, but must now try to expand its regular contributions to compensate for the loss in annual income.

Will the cuts affect KTEH's commitment to collaborations with independents? According to executive producer Peter Baker, if the station can maintain its production capability, it "will continue to work with independents, if not more than before." Currently, KTEH is producing a documentary with Dorothy Fadiman about the Peninsula School in Menlo Park, California and developing *Berkeley in the '60s* with Mark Kitchell, *The Porning of America* with Harriet Koskoff, and a major series on bio-technology and genetic engineering, *The Second Spiral,* with Jan Kraepelain.

KTEH's financial straits may be somewhat alleviated by the challenge grant it recently received from the National Endowment for the Humanities. But the station will have to meet stringent matching requirements in order to qualify for grant dollars. *—RT*

NEH NOMINATION

Edward A. Curran, deputy director of the Peace Corps, has been nominated to succeed William Bennett as chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Curran surfaced in the news three years ago when he was dismissed from his job as director of the National Institute of Education, a major federal research agency, as part of the early Reagan Administration's Department of Education shake-up. According to the *New York Times* [June 22, 1982], Curran was dismissed by former Secretary of Education T.H. Bell because he had gone over the secretary's head and proposed to Reagan that the Institute be abolished. Conservative think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation have long called for the abolition of the DOE and its related agencies.

The *Times* reports that while at the NIE, Curran had introduced a number of conservative reform ideas for possible funding by the Institute, including "school vouchers, tuition tax credits, home instruction and 'freedom from excessive mandates and prohibitions enforced by Federal and state agencies.'" Before coming to the NIE, Curran was a volunteer in the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign and had been headmaster of the National Cathedral School, an exclusive girls' school in New York.

At press time, no Congressional review hearings on Curran's nomination had been scheduled. Curran was not available for comment. *—RT*

NYSCA BUDGET BOOSTED

The New York State legislature has voted a $41,095,000 appropriation to the New York State Council on the Arts—$3-million more than was requested by the Council. Two million dollars of the increase is slated for a new arts education program. The remaining $1-million will be spent on Local Assistance, Folk Arts, Decentralization, and LIFT programs. Last year's arts budget was $35.3-million. *—RT*

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FILM-TO-TAPE: WHICH ELEMENT TO TRANSFER? PART II

David Leitner

A color print distorts the scale of densities recorded on negative, flattening highlight detail and extending the darkest shadow densities beyond the range that the flying-spot telecine can reproduce [see "In Focus: Which Element to Transfer? Part I," April 1985]. Inasmuch as the telecine faithfully reproduces what is fed into it, the result is: distortion in, distortion out.

Original negative, on the other hand, obtains a linear recording of at least eight f-stops. "Linear" means that the ordering of brightnesses in the real world is preserved as a proportionate scale of densities on the negative. When color negative is fed into the telecine, the image on the monitor reveals shadow detail that is scaled in brightness to midtone and highlight detail much as the eye would see it. The result is decidedly true-to-life, unlike the video transfer from print, which resembles the real world as seen through one of those murky viewing glasses that some cinematographers use to predict screen contrast.

Part I of "Which Element to Transfer?" concluded with the suggestion that an alternative transfer element to color print is the master positive, a special fine-grain, first-generation positive from which a second-generation duplicate negative is meant to be printed. Since a master positive is never directly projected, most filmmakers are probably unacquainted with its qualities. Like original negative, it has an overall orange appearance due to the presence of a corrective "color mask" that nullifies flaws in the color filtering of its dye layers. (This technique improves saturation and ensures a neutral grey scale. A print intended for projection must forego such orange color masking in favor of some less apparent—less effective?—solution to the dilemma of imperfect dyes. The depth of the orange color suggests the signficance of these dye layer shortcomings.)

Lack of screen contrast is a second reason the master positive is unsuitable for direct projection. Both the master positive and subsequent duplicate negative are printed on the same film stock, Kodak 7243. To duplicate the original negative as closely as possible, 7243 in both roles must reproduce contrast at a ratio of 1:1. Otherwise, distortions in the tonal scale of the original negative introduced at the master positive stage would be joined by additional distortions at the dupe negative stage, and a print from the dupe negative could not match an original answer print in contrast. Since the orange master positive reproduces the tonal scale of the original negative at unity, in the end it looks like nothing so much as the original negative—but with the tonalites reversed to form a positive image.



Color negative image as reproduced by a 7384 answer print (left) and 7243 master positive (right). Rendering these examples in black and white neutralizes the orange cast of the 7243 master positive, leaving only differences in tonal scale reproduction between the two film stocks. Note the richer shadow detail of the master positive, e.g., the bookcase in the background. While the telecine can restore a pleasing contrast to the master positive image, it can't restore any lost shadow or highlight detail to the answer print.

Courtesy [illegible] 60 Minute.

As with negative, the telecine discards the orange color cast of master positive and restores a realistic contrast to their image. Since the tonal scale distortions characteristic of standard and low contrast prints are avoided (project a master positive: you'll see shadow detail you never knew existed from viewing the answer print), the master postive transfer is a virtual match for negative in tonal fidelity and color saturation.

Color Reversal Intermediate, commonly known as C.R.I., provides a similar video transfer quality. This special reversal film, Kodak 7249, reproduces the original negative in only one step. It doesn't convert the negative image to positive, but, instead, renders a direct copy of the negative. Like the master positive, C.R.I. features an orange color mask and reproduces the contrast and density of the original negative at a ratio of 1:1.

However, like camera reversal films, C.R.I. doesn't possess as long a tonal scale, or "latitude," as original negative (or, for that matter, master positive). How, then, can reversal C.R.I. faithfully copy the negative? The key is to be found in the low contrast reproduction ratio, or "gamma," of color negative. As illustrated in Part I, color negative, with its gamma of approximately .55, translates a real-world brightness range of at least eight stops into a density range 45 percent shorter than that which would obtain from a contrast reproduction ratio of 1:1. It is this condensed density range that the C.R.I. can accommodate, although with little room for error. If the laboratory under- or overexposes the C.R.I., either the highlights or shadows as originally recorded by the negative will be compressed and thereby distorted. (The master positive, by comparison, can be under- or overexposed one stop with no noticeable tonal degradation.) To make matters worse , C.R.I. is

perhaps the most difficult film stock to manufacture and process, and even the best labs bemoan the vicissitudes of trying to develop the stuff consistently. For instance, the characteristic curves of the red, green, and blue sensitive layers of C.R.I. never seem to parallel; in practice, this means that a C.R.I. grey scale displayed by the telecine can appear grey in the middle, while the shadow tones take on a coloration all their own.

Lest I appear unduly critical of C.R.I., it has indeed proved its mettle in 15 years of commercial use, stemming from a time when color negative meant 35mm and professional 16mm knew only reversal. But the very nature of C.R.I. makes likely the accumulation of many small errors in sensitometry and process control—not to mention printing—often resulting in a contrasty image compared to the original, or even to the dupe negative from the master positive. The tonal scale often appears curtailed at both ends, and colors, though seemingly deeper because of increased color contrast, look less subtle and pure. Again, to be fair, there are proponents of this "look" who defend C.R.I. both for the projected image and video transfer.

And what of the second-generation negative made from the transfer positive? In video transfer, it's essentially a ringer for the master positive, but with expected generational losses. Since it involves two contact printing steps, there is a slight contrast build-up, as contrastiness accompanies contact printing, and there is an additional loss of sharpness. It is the second condition that usually proves more signficant, for unless the dupe negative incorporates optical effects or titles that can't be replicated in video, it is the master positive with its better definition that will be chosen for transfer.

Why are fine differences in definition between two generations of 16mm detected upon transfer to NTSC video, a medium of somewhat lower definition? Either the differences in definition between two film generations are *not* so small, or NTSC video can muster an image with noticeably more resolution that we're led to expect. In fact, both are true.

In the contact printing of motion picture film. the negative and unexposed raw stock (print, master positive, C.R.I., etc.) are joined emulsion-to-emulsion and partially wrapped around a large sprocket. The image-bearing negative lies directly against the sprocket and the unexposed raw stock lies on top of the negative. A small window under the negative passes the light necessary for exposure, while the sprocket advances the two strands of film at a high rate of speed. Just as the racetrack horse on the inside runs the shorter distance, the negative against the sprocket travels a shorter distance than the raw stock on the outside. To compensate, 16mm print raw stock perforations are spaced .0006" further apart than negative perforations. In theory, this additional pitch between positive perforations equals the extra distance traveled by the outer strand. That is, if the sprocket is perfectly formed, the alignment of the printing machine faultless, the necessary film tensions accurate, the rate of shrinkage of the positive from processing precisely as predicted, age and atmospheric conditions notwithstanding. . .

These ideal conditions at the printing machine's sprocket are never fully met, and no attempt has been made to similarly modify the perforation spacing of 16mm master positive, dupe negative, or C.R.I. raw stocks. Therefore, a microscopic amount of slippage routinely ensues between the negative and the raw stock during exposure, as each frame of raw stock traveling at the greater radius attempts to slide back onto each new sprocket tooth in order to match the position of each negative frame. This unfortunate phenomenon (and others like it, depending on the overall condition of the printing machine) serves to deprive the duplicated 16mm image of the very finest level of detail recorded on the negative. While the results are quite acceptable commercially—and have been since the inception of 16mm—it's a shame that after all the testing of lenses and cameras and agonizing over film stock resolving powers, the truly fine differences in definition can be lost in the wash.

How do we ever know how sharp the image on the negative is? At best, we view it once removed, judging it on the evidence of a contact print, our instrument of inspection a projector with, at best, a dubious maintenance history. (And anyhow, what projector mechanism matches the registration of an Aaton or Arri, what projector lens the clarity of a multicoated Zeiss distagon?) Unless we examine the negative directly, we can't know what's on it.

Ironically, we have go to video to see what's on our film original. Only in film-to-tape transfer can the negative be imaged directly, the orange color mask removed and the tonal scale reversed from negative to positive. And the results are always striking. Compared to the same image transferred from print, the direct negative image is crisp and clear, as if a veil had been lifted. In a close head shot, for instance, strands of hair are countable, wrinkles discernable, and what was a dull highlight on the print is now a colorful sparkle in the eye. In a word, lifelike.

If the flying-spot scanner were no more sophisticated than the standard schoolroom projector, the fine definition of original negative might go unexploited. Fortunately, the flying-spot banished the projector-aimed-at-video camera film-chain almost a decade ago. (That is, for NTSC. Flying-spot scanners have been a common fixture in European TV stations since World War II.) Fortunately. . . because the saticon and plumbicon tubes featured in professional video cameras impose their own limitations on resolution, image geometry, and dynamic range (length and linearity of tonal scale reproduction)—limitations not intrinsic to the NTSC signal itself.

The flying-spot scanner doesn't use these camera pick-up tubes; instead, it projects onto each frame of film a pinpoint of light that rapidly traces the familiar raster pattern of TV lines. On the reverse side of the film, three photosensitive devices akin to incident light meters measure the levels of red, green, and blue light that are filtered by the film's color emulsion at each point in the trajectory of the "flying spot." From this color and positional information, a video signal is fashioned.

Unlike the three-tube video camera, no color registration is required, since the dye layers of the film are permanently registered. Horizontal resolution, a function of the minutenesss of the flying spot, challenges the resolving power of the film itself, sometimes with the unwanted side effect of reproducing the film graininess too acutely. (The Rank Cintel flying-spot scanner incorporates a filter to keep its output within the limits of NTSC bandwidth.) And by avoiding conventional video camera pick-up tubes with their 40:1 contrast limit, the flying-spot scanner can reproduce a 150:1 contrast ratio—and, by sacrificing signal-to-noise, upwards of a 500:1 contrast ratio. Combine these performance characteristics with those of color negative—a real-world contrast ratio of 256:1, eight stops, recorded linearly but condensed 45 percent (logarithmically) to form a low density image with a contrast of 21:1, with enough resolution to sustain a blow-up to 35mm if desired—and it might appear that 16mm negative and the flying-spot scanner hand-in-hand make a superior video camera!

Most of the films we've seen on TV or as video have been transferred from prints: all the filmed Hollywood TV serials that we grew up with in the sixties and seventies, for instance. Therefore, it's quite possible that the so-called "film look" signifies nothing more than the tonal distortion exacted by the requirements of projection contrast coupled with the loss of fine, high-frequency detail inherent in duplicating film as film. Perhaps it would be more accurate to speak of the "film-print look." And many are indeed enamored of this look: tight-fisted producers every day choose the expense of film production over video in quest of it. But as it becomes clear that original negative is superbly suited to film-to-tape transfer—that it still looks like film, but with greatly enhanced color, sharpness, and realism—expectations regarding the mythical look of film will undoubtedly rise on the part of producers and audiences alike.

So why do producers continue to transfer answer prints, or C.R.I.s, or master positives, when the original A&B rolls of color negative are at hand? Stay tuned.

David Leitner works at DuArt Film Labs and DuArt Video in New York.

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PANELS AND PORTIO
INDEPENDENTS AND THE



"I Promise to Remember: The Story of Frankie Lyman" was funded by CPB for the "Matters of Life and Death" series. At that time, CPB could still say that one of its priorities was support for "smaller" independents who might not have achieved national recognition.

Courtesy PBS

Susan Linfield

Last March, Congressman Henry A. Waxman (D-Cal.) wrote a two-page letter to Ron Hull, director of the Program Fund at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. It read in part:

> "I am writing to let you know of my concern over the relationship between the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and independent producers...
>
> "Of particular concern to me is the apparent discontinuation of the original peer panel review process. As I understand it, this process allowed peer readers to shortlist proprosals in making selections. Today, CPB staff, in consultation with PBS, eliminate over 80 percent of all proposals. Panels then cut this number by as much as half, and final awards are determined by the Program Fund's director and staff...
>
> "Unfortunately, it now appears the panel process has been weakened even further by your recent announcement that at least four of the nine positions on the panel would be guaranteed to public television personnel. I am concerned that salaried personnel not have a disproportionate influence in awarding the national production funds. Moreover, the seating of so many station employees may conflict with the statutory requirement that proposals be evaluated on the basis of comparative merit by 'panels of outside experts'..."

Has the peer panel process at CPB been undermined? And if so, what is the effect on independent access to CPB funds, and on the types of programs that reach the air?

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The use of review panels was mandated by the 1978 Telecommunications Act. The act authorized the Corporation to facilitate "diversity, creativity, excellence and innovation" in programming, and to allocate a "substantial" portion of its funds to independents. It also stated that, "to the extent practicable, proposals ...shall be evaluated...by panels of outside experts, representing diverse interests and perspectives, appointed by the Corporation..." A House report accompanying the legislation directed the Fund to seek out "the smaller independent organizations and individuals who, while talented, may not yet have received national recognition." And in "Program Fund Priorities and Procedures," a 1980 paper written for (and approved by) the CPB board of directors, Lewis Freedman, the Fund's first director, wrote, "The Program Fund must be open to proposals that defy description...While taking full advantage of the expertise of the panel system, the final decision-making process must always allow for the most creative, original, unpredictable, and seemingly nutty idea."

For the early Program Fund series, such as *Crisis to Crisis* and *Matters of Life and Death,* each proposal was read by three independent (that is, non-CPB) readers; if any two said yes, the proposal was passed on to an advisory panel, with Freedman making the final decision. "It took a lot of time," says Gene Katt, deputy director of the Program Fund. "It was a protracted process, but it seemed to work well."

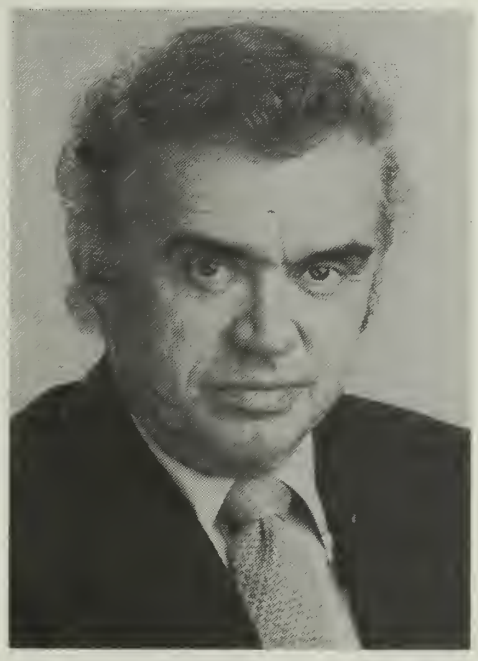
But approximately two years ago, Katt says, "we decided to do away with readers." He explained that, prior to making this decision, the Fund had experimented with staff review of proposals, and compared its choices with those of the readers; the results, Katt says, were essentially the same. Now, each proposal is read by one of

NS
PROGRAM FUND

the Fund's three program officers (instead of by three readers), who writes a summary of the project which is read by Katt and director Ron Hull. "Then," Katt says, "there is a meeting, in which each proposal is discussed with the progam officer, the director, and myself. Before it's turned down or passed on to a panel, the program officer must give concrete reasons as to why."

Katt says the Program Fund staff is "pretty knowledgeable about independents. They meet with independents in groups, look at their work. Over the years they've built up a tremendous amount of contact." Don Marbury, program officer for cultural and children's programs, claims the abandonment of readers had little effect on the Program Fund staff. "We read every proposal anyhow," he said.

Some independents agree that the discontinuation of the reader process has made little difference. "I don't have a problem with it," says Lillian Jimenez, program officer of the Film Fund and chairperson of the board of directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, who sat on a recent advisory panel and has been a reader. But Tony Silver, director of *Style Wars,* which received Program Fund money, and also a member of an advisory panel, says, "I think the staff is absolutely buried. Talking to them on the phone about my own project ideas, I would get a sense of total confusion: 'Oh yeah, I remember now.' There's an off-the-cuff reaction to things that comes from having to deal with too much stuff. Whether or not the discontinuation of readers is fair in theory, I really question it in practice."



At last year's PBS Program Fair in Seattle, Ron Hull announced that all Open Solicitation panels would have at least four station representatives.
Courtesy CPB

Last year, the newly-formed National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers and CPB began negotiations over panel procedures and policies. As a result, the Fund initiated a recall procedure: panelists can now review the list of all proposals submitted, and send a proposal on to a future panel for reconsideration if it has been rejected by the staff. Katt says that, so far, only two proposals have been sent. But according to Jimenez, the recall allowance is not included in the written instructions panelists receive, nor is there any indication as to why a proposal was rejected (the staff's comments are not given to the panelists). William Arhos, vice president for programming at KLRN-San Antonio and KLRU-Austin, who has been on two panels, says, "I looked at the list, but it's not anything detailed. I just wasn't inclined to take on more [work]. I didn't see any proposals that I might have heard of before."

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At the Program Fund Fair in Seattle last October, Ron Hull announced that, henceforth, all Open Solicitation panels would contain at least four public television station representatives. (Hull claims the panels have nine members each, but in fact many have had only eight.) "The stations are the consumers," Hull explains. "I'm anxious that the programs show up at a good time on the PBS schedule. I just wanted to make the point that we were going to have station input." The announcement outraged some members of the independent community. Jeffrey A. Chester of the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers told *Broadcasting* magazine: "It would be one thing...if [Hull] said, 'Okay, there'll be four station people, four independents and one expert.' But he is unwilling to make a commitment to name a specified number of independents. He's only willing to do it for the stations." (In negotiations with the National Coalition, Hull had previously agreed that a majority of each panel would be picked from a pool of experts chosen by CPB staff and the Coalition. The CPB board of directors, while approving the creation of such a pool, rejected the provision that its members constitute a majority of each panel. The telecommunications newspaper *Current* reported that Hull said his October promise to the stations did not have to go before the board.)

The Program Fund insists that the station "quota" is not meant to—and will not—harm independents. "It was *not* done to subvert the panel process," Katt maintains. "Its purpose is to acquaint public television managers with independents, and hopefully to develop a better reception for independent material. It doesn't do us any good to fund independents if they don't get shown locally. Public television managers don't know independents, and frankly they've had some problems with some of the programs." Hull says, "I want to see the stations and independent producers get together. In the long run, that's the relationship that's really going to pay off."

Panel participants—both independents and public television representatives—agree that the panels do not disintegrate into bloc voting, and have generally favorable things to say about each other. "The station people on my panel were independent-minded, and interesting," says Silver, a member of the June 1984 panel. "They were thoughtful. They didn't fit the stereotype of station people: they weren't philistines, or conservative." KLRU's William Arhos, who was on the same panel, called it "pretty amiable. I recall only one person diametrically opposed to what most of us in public television wanted. I've since had communication with three of those independents, and one of them visited me when he was shooting here in town." Filmmaker Ken Burns (*Brooklyn Bridge*) said the station representatives on this panel "were great. It was



As part of the "Crisis to Crisis" series, programs like "Books Under Fire" were reviewed through the reader/advisory panel system.

like camp when you're growing up. They'd say, 'No one's going to watch this,' and we could tell them, 'These people just aren't qualified.' I though the process was fabulous. It works to the advantage of independents everywhere." Jon Rice, special assistant to the president of KQED-San Francisco, who was a program manager for 27 years, says, "What delighted me [about the October 1984 panel] was that nobody behaved as expected. There was very little bloc voting. As a program manager, you try to get people to vote as people, not as women, or Samoans, or whatever. We have come a long way toward compromising with independents, and they with us."

Nonetheless, various aspects of the panel process—combined with federal cutbacks in funding for CPB—have created anxiety among some independents. "It really bothered me that, at the panel, you could not get them to tell you how much the total pie was," says Silver. "So it was hard to apportion it." Because panels therefore approve more projects than CPB can fund, Silver charges that the Fund staff has great leeway in deciding which projects actually receive money. Hull estimates that 95 percent of panel-approved projects receive funding; Katt puts the number at 50–70 percent. In addition, they estimate that approximately five proposals per year that the panels *reject* receive money anyway (last year, a total of 63 Open Solicitation proposals were funded). Grumbled James Day, former president of KQED and WNET-New York, who has been on two panels, "If you skip what happens *after* the panel makes its recommendations, I'm satisfied."

Some producers say that independents without name recognition are increasingly shut out from serious consideration by the panels. "I came away with the feeling that the true independent was getting pushed further and further into the corner," says Silver. "There is a real caution, knowing that the pie is small. You sometimes find yourself geting conservative about whether a person can pull it off. The person attempting to do something for the first time is at a disadvantage." Jimenez says that, on her panel last February, "the public television people didn't know who any of the independents were, with the exception of William Miles and Fred Wiseman. And if they don't know your work, and there are *any* weaknesses in your proposal, you're doomed." The Program Fund's mission to seek out "smaller independents" and "nutty ideas" cannot, evidently, be realized in an age of fiscal austerity. Jon Rice says, "In the old days, everyone said, 'This person hasn't done anything, give them a chance.' But we don't have enough money to risk it on people with no track record. People should try to get local money if they have no track record."

The CPB board of directors has mandated news and public affairs as one of this year's funding priorities (the others are children's programming and drama). "Some areas, like nature, are very popular, but they easily attract corporate money," Katt explains. "There are other areas that need motivation, and this is where the Program Fund should put its money." Rice agrees, "It's enormously hard to get corporate underwriting [for documentaries], so it's perfect for CPB to put an emphasis there." But Jimenez charges that, at her panel, "entertainment was *clearly* the priority. Station representatives want to draw in audiences. The panel approved a project on [Katharine] Hepburn and [Spencer] Tracy, and one on W.C. Fields." Another independent panelist said, "I was surprised. I wasn't prepared to see quite so many music and dance productions on the final list. I felt there should have been more of a balance." Within the last year, the Program Fund has allocated money in the Open Solicitation category for such music and dance programs as *Baryshnikov by Tharp, Watch Me Move!, Electric Spell, A Jazz Tribute,* and *About Tap.* On the other hand, four of these five shows treat minority subjects.

Yet the panels' sensitivity to the Congressional mandate that CPB fund minority productions has been questioned. Silver says that Ron Hull's "one overt piece of guidance was urging us to give extra consideration to minority programming." But one panel member, who asked to remain anonymous, said, "There is a disturbing lack of projects written *by* minorities, instead of *about* minorities. Do they count as minority? Nobody on the panel seemed to care, or even questioned, 'Whose vision is this?'" According to Hull, however, a project is counted as "minority" only if three major slots—producer, line producer, director, writer, major talent, subject matter—are minority.

One producer has suggested that projects be categorized by budget for panel consideration. Agrees Silver, "Apples, oranges and peanuts are all thrown in one basket for the panel. It was offensive that some things that could obviously get station or corporate support were there." Many panelists stressed the importance of a tight pro-



posal. Jimenez warned, "Schleppy little independent filmmakers come in with proposals that don't make sense. It's a serious problem. These other people are *professional* grantwriters." Even more important is a good work-in-progress reel. Explains KLRU's Arhos, "The worst thing a producer can do is send a mediocre sample, and expect the panel to understand that it's going to be better later."

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Whatever the shortcomings of the panel process, today, *most CPB-funded shows do not utilize peer panels at all.*

The early Program Fund series—*Crisis to Crisis, Matters of Life and Death,* and even National Television Theatre, the precursor of *American Playhouse*—used the reader/advisory panel mechanism. But by the end of 1982, four station consortia productions had been established—*American Playhouse, Frontline, Great Performances,* and *Wonderworks*—which, although receiving large amounts of Program Fund money, were not required to use peer panels in selecting projects. (In FY '84, the consortia shows, along with *The MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour,* received $13 million from CPB; Open Solicitations received $6.6 million.) The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers has charged—as noted in the House Committee on Energy and Commerce report to the Public Broadcasting Amendments Act of 1984—that, in 1983, 49 percent of CPB's production funds were distributed using panels, compared with 69 percent in 1982 and 71 percent in 1981. Now, only the Open Solicitation ghetto into which independent proposals have been pushed regularly utilizes the panel review process.



"Is Anyone Home on the Range?" was funded under the Open Solicitation category, into which most independent proposals now fall.
Courtesy filmmaker

Hull claims the consortia do not diverge from the Program Fund's original goals. "I think they live up to our mandates in every respect," he says. "The best work on public television is done by independent producers, usually working with a station. I believe independents don't give up anything by doing that." Although overstepping peer review, the consortia shows are nominally subject to CPB funding provisos. "They must use indepedent producers, and provide opportunities for minorities," says Katt. "And we watch them quite carefully to see that they do." *Frontline,* however, offered independents, in Rep. Waxman's words, "so little input...that CPB was compelled to disallow the program from counting as an independent production." [For background on *Frontline,* see "A World of Their Own," *The Independent,* Jan./Feb. 1983.] Even some stations have been unhappy with *Frontline*'s treatment of independents; according to Maria Smith, director of programming and assistant station manager at KUED-Salt Lake City, "There was some discussion [at the Regional Program Managers Meeting in October 1984] that more independent productions should be included in *Frontline. Frontline* was created as an umbrella for independent documentaries, but the first year saw a lot of station productions." But Hull insists that "the vast majority of *Frontline* programs are independently produced. Independents are well served there." He adds, "It was the *structure* of how *Frontline* received and responded to proposals" that created problems with independents. According to Katt, the Program Fund has met with *Frontline* personnel and "imposed certain conditions on them—such as being more responsive about why proposals were rejected and publicizing the fact they're looking for proposals." Hull says, "It's my hope that we'll be able to count appropriate *Frontline* programs as independent in the future."

Public television veteran James Day says of the consortia, "I could probably argue a case for those big blocs of money—except perhaps *MacNeil/Lehrer*—but it really comes down to there not being enough money in the system. There should be both [station consortia and independent productions], but I don't think money should necessarily be taken out of the big projects and given to Open Solicitations."

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Is the Program Fund glass half empty or half full? Hull is optimistic about the future of independents in public television. "I think it's getting better and better," he says. "We need to take the best ideas from each sector of the public television system. And the federal funding levels are going up. As long as that's true, we're all going to come out ahead. That should be our goal: to get the highest appropriations from Congress." But independent producer Silver says: "I think it's a very dim near and medium-range future. The only hope is for Congress to mandate a set-aside of funds for independents."



Consortia programs now gobble up a large portion of the Program Fund's budget. Above, "The Hoboken Chicken Emergency," part of the "Wonderworks" series.
Courtesy Wonderworks

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VIDEO, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE EDUCATED ARTIST

Catherine Lord



Maurice Tuchman tried to weave this corporate/art talent grid into real-life collaborations though his Art and Technology extravaganza.

Photo courtesy of LACMA

The following is a revised version of a talk given during a recent panel titled "Video and the Education of the Un-Artist." The reference is to "The Education of the Un-Artist," a series of three articles published in the early 1970s by Allan Kaprow, self-described as "founder and dean of the Happenings movement."[1] Not surprisingly, the "un-artists" Kaprow tendered as role models were principals in the late sixties conceptual, "happening" crowd. More interesting is the argument Kaprow used to promote their activities—a half-baked dream to return art to the realm of social utility, propelled by an expedient faith in the neutrality of technology, economics, and power.

•

Rereading Allan Kaprow, it was impossible not to get into a mental argument with almost everything. I won't cover all the details, since this is not the place for a long squabble with the early seventies. A few things, however, are at once relevant and irresistible. First there is Kaprow's conflation of cultural criticism with linguistic taxonomy: in a way all too evocative of the jargon now spoken by video curators, he can proceed only by attaching modifiers to the troublesome root (non-art, anti-art, art-art, and un-art), picking the right answer (un-art), and attacking the rest. It is, obviously, a futile maneuver—one cannot demolish the idea of art (or video art) as a socially transcendent activity by further refining its subcategories. Second is Kaprow's bias toward avoidance: un-art is the winning permutation; anti-art, which might be not only a more confrontational but a more feasible option, is quickly dismissed as well-intentioned but naive politics, inevitably subject to cooptation. The third thing, apropos of cooptation, is the relationship proposed between artists (which is what Kaprow means, although he calls them "former artists" or "un-artists") and technology. Take this passage:

> Agencies for the spread of information via the mass mediums [*sic*], and for the instigation of social activities, will become the new channels of insight and communication; not substituting for the classic "art experience"...but offering former artists compelling ways of participating in structured processes that can reveal new values, including the value of fun.
>
> In this respect the technological pursuits of today's non-artists and un-artists will multiply as industry, government and education provide their resources. "Systems" technology involving the interfacing of personal and group experiences, instead of "product" technology, will dominate the

trend. Software, in other words. But it will be a systems approach that favors an openness toward outcome, in contrast to the literal and goal-oriented uses now employed by most systems specialists. . . .[T]he feedback loop is the model. Playfulness and the playful use of technology suggests a positive interest in acts of continuous discovery. Playfulness can become in the near future a social and psychological benefit.[2]

The rhetoric of process, not product, is predictable for the era. What is startling, even in retrospect, is the idea of structured play placed in explicit metaphorical relation to money. To begin with, it sounds like kindergarten-teacher shoptalk—children learn better if you sneak in the serious stuff while they're having fun. But note also the notion of *useful* play. As Kaprow allows later, "It is only when active artists willingly cease to be artists that they may convert their abilities, like dollars into yen, into something the world can spend."[3] And finally, there is the bewildering assumption that the goal-oriented producers of technology would like nothing better than to assume the role of playground supervisors for the grownup children that artists, non-artists, even un-artists are. ("[A]ll the secular world's a playground,"[4] claims Kaprow.) It's an utterly apolitical model of subversion, and needless to say, it didn't happen, any of it. The producers of today's fabulously expensive communications systems are not putting their capital into more "open" software. Such systems are not, and never were, oriented to "play," "openness," or democratic communications.

Lest it be argued that Kaprow was merely an innocent victim of the supposed optimism of the period, let me point out that the odds against him were abudantly evident—even in the artworld, even in the late sixties. The classical case is the "Art and Technology" extravaganza sponsored by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.[5] Organized by Maurice Tuchman between 1966 and 1971, "Art and Technology" was based on the premise that in "futuristic" Southern California it would be a nice idea if artists could wander through high-tech industries like TRW, Lockheed, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, and Litton as they would through their own studios. It would be, in Tuchman's mind, the logical art historical sequel to that "collective will to gain access to modern industry" that, all by itself, spawned the Futurists, the Constructivists, and the Bauhaus. LACMA's board of trustees got Tuchman through the front doors, his sales pitch being that corporations could get a tax write-off, perhaps learn something from the exposure to creativity (fly-by-night R&D?) and acquire a free work of art to boot. He invited about 80 artists to submit projects—no women among them; about 25 projects materialized. The statistical drop-off is what I mean by saying that the odds were





The Art and Technology Program, sponsored by the Los Angeles Museum of Art, was based on the premise that in "futuristic" Southern California it would be a nice idea if artists could wander through high-tech industries as they would through their own studios. Robert Whitman, one artist participating in the program, depended completely on Philco-Ford physicist John Forkner to execute his installation (above) at the Osaka Expo in 1970. Robert Rauschenberg's collaboration (below) with Teledyne, under the auspices of the Art and Technology Program, resulted in the construction of "Mud-Muse," a sculpture in which mud, compressed air, and sound-generated electronic impulses interact.

already evident: Tuchman's catalogue for the exhibition is an inadvertently hilarious chronicle of the battles lost against the forces of corporate cost accounting. There are also more subtle structural indicators of the real priorities. The cover of the catalogue is a grid of portraits, corporate execs (suits, ties, clean-shaven) interspersed with artists (fashionably hairy). The artists' biographies inside the catalogue are limited to birthdate and city of residence; the corporate biographies detail accomplishments, and are illustrated with the corporate logo.

I've wandered, however, from the matter of technological optimism and artists in playgrounds, as well as the real issue at hand—education. Despite my personal preferences, I understand education not primarily as an instrument of enlightenment but as a feeder system for vocations that are determined by economic priorities. Between Allan Kaprow and us, in 1985, stand certain significant developments in the uses of electronic signalling and in the uses of education:

1. The consolidation into corporate hands of information technologies, information gathering, and the transnational system of telecommunications.
2. The consolidation of both broadcast and cable television into an arena for corporate speech, for governmental indoctrination, right-wing social mobilization, and, at home and abroad, for profit, not for public interest.
3. The defunding by both state and federal cultural and educational agencies of grassroots communications uses of video technology.
4. The institutionalization of video as an art form—exhibitable, fundable, marketable, and all too often modernistically obsessed with its own electronic deviations.
5. The advent of training progams for video artists, paralleling earlier accreditation systems for painters, sculptors, photographers, etc.
6. The continued development in universities of well-funded, conservative communications programs which address policy, planning, and various technologies, often determined by political priorities as well as programs specifically geared to the film and television industries.
7. The explicit decision of the federal government to "disinvest" in education. The euphemism means that federal monies are to be withdrawn from students, not from, for example, university research and development programs. Assuming that there are many students —contrary to the suggestion of William Bennett, the new Secretary of Education—who simply don't have cars, stereos, or pre-paid vacations on the beach to enable the "divestitures" which would pay their tuition bills after cuts in federal student aid programs, the result is that educational institutions will increasingly become the domain of the wealthy and of those members of the middle class whose parents have decided the investment is worth it.[6] As the Heritage Foundation has eloquently argued, the rich deserve to use this country's schools—they paid for them.



Oyvind Fahlstrom's collage of advertising Americana is based on the products of Heath and Company, a commercial sign manufacturer that Fahlstrom worked with through the Art and Technology Program.

In view of the above—the ghettoization of video into an art form, communications monopolies, and the elimination of democratic education—there are multiple ironies involved in embarking on a leisurely discussion, in this academic situation, of such notions as the education of artists, or the education of un-artists, or video culture, or video and the education of un-artists. To put it bluntly, the education of the unperson is the trend: educational institutions are less concerned than they used to claim to be with humanistic discovery, much less play. Johns Hopkins and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to cite two obvious examples, account between them for over $500-million in defense contracts.[7] It is not accidental that the computer industry is courting the education industry, with the aim of creating a client class dependent on industry software and potentially dependent on privately controlled information banks.

Nevertheless, even educational institutions in the business of inculcating conservatism and managerial skills run the risk of coincidentally providing enough information and analytical prowess to produce the exact opposite of their intended effect. The paranoids are right: schools attract radicals. It is not coincidental that the right wing is mobilizing around schools and colleges—paying close attention to libraries, student organizations, textbooks, speakers, faculty, etc.

In this situation, when one is involved in arts education—and whether one is aiming for art, non-art, anti-art, or un-art—certain specific problems arise. Art schools and art departments generally attract students who want to be creative, in a vague sort of way, or students who want to be famous, in an appallingly concrete way. Art schools provide the fodder for a booming industry, and their administrations' purposes are not, to put it mildly, inherently radical or even liberal. One of the results of this state of affairs is summed up by that unforgettable remark that being educated as an artist means not being educated at all. One of the main reasons for this conservatism is that it is against the interests of arts institutions to make explicit their investment in the production of culture and the consumption of technology.

Decent education, for those who wish to provide it in such settings, must offer a critique of its own existence, which is to say the artworld, as well as a critique of technology and media. Arts education is under no obligation to be useless. After all, being an artist is to be marginal: the point is to learn how to use that position well. Arts education that claims to be alternative must not only risk producing but outright encourage the anti-artist. In other words, art schools—or more likely, their faculty—should try to empower (which, though it is now a trite word, would not be a trite achievement) their students rather than grade them against a market (even the modest video market), rather than produce stars who will lure in the subsequent batches of students needed to finance a machine that actually runs on the "failures." In video, it would thus be necessary to convey an understanding that most so-called communications equipment is not designed or marketed to promote communication—to receive and record, not to transmit. In video, an education would include an understanding of how to function, how to communicate, without access to enormous state-of-the-art computers and splendid broadcast studios. (Just because video is now said to be an art does not mean that it has to be made with state-of-the-art equipment.)

In short, it bears repeating, as often as possible, that producing media, using technology to communicate, is a political act. Education means learning why.

NOTES

1. The panel was organized by Lyn Blumenthal for the national conference of the College Art Association in Los Angeles. The articles in the series are: Allan Kaprow, "The Education of the UnArtist," *Artnews,* 69:10 (February 1971), pp. 28–31, 66–68; *Artnews,* 71:3 (May 1972), pp. 34–39; *Art in America,* 62:1 (January 1974), pp. 85–91.
2. *Artnews,* February 1971, pp. 66–67.
3. *Artnews,* May 1972, p. 39.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Maurice Tuchman, *A Report on the Art and Technology Program of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1967–1971* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1971).
6. Media coverage of Bennett's remarks at his first press conference in February 1985 was heavy. See *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* 29:23 (Feb. 20, 1985), for a cogent account.

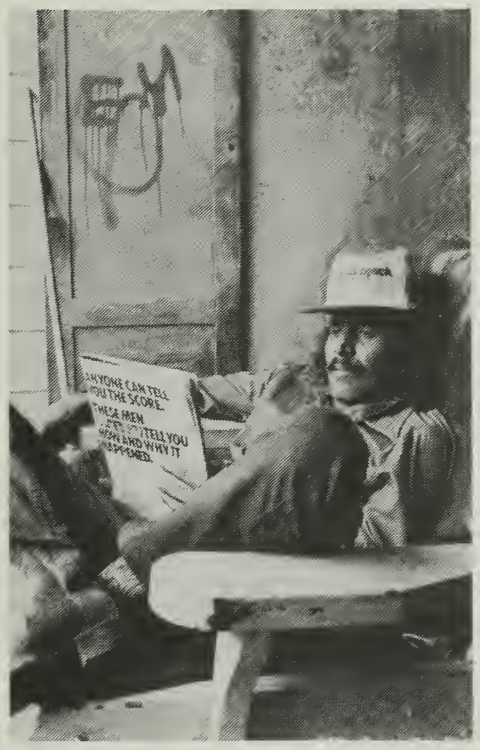
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THE REVOLUTION WILL BE TELEVISED.



Photo: Elizabeth Sisco



Louis Hock hopes that people will watch "The Mexican Tapes" (above, and top right) at their leisure, the way they read a book.

Photo: Elizabeth Sisco

Renee Tajima

Will the revolution in ½" video technology—and prices—start without progressive film and videomakers? Half-inch VHS and Beta video decks may soon become as common as the television set in most American homes. This new accessibility to low-cost hardware and tapes could ultimately change the way organizing groups use media.

Some producers are not letting the revolution pass, opting to test the market by distributing their works in ½" formats, at a low price, in order to reach their intended, grassroots audience. For instance, it is now possible to buy a VHS copy of Robert Richter's *In Our Hands* for as little as $29.95 at your local video store. But at the same time, an independent film can still run into the hundreds of dollars on ¾" *or* VHS and Beta. What are the implications of these developments for the dissemination of social issue media?

Over a decade ago, video production was hailed as the best new idea in organizing technology since the mimeograph machine—a cheap alternative to 16mm film production. It was reasoned that if tapes could be produced cheaply, they could also be widely distributed at low cost. But somewhere along the way the vision of video-for-the-masses blurred in the face of economic reality.

Even before the Reagan federal budget cuts, funding criteria for media production began to shift toward high end, "quality" works that could justify grant dollars by reaching a wide, general audience. The best way to reach that audience is broadcast television, which requires production on film or broadcast quality video. Fewer and fewer agencies would fund low end works, so producers felt pressured to upgrade their productions, although many did continue to produce with their own equipment or through community access centers.

Videotapes and films-on-tape can be cheaper to distribute than 16mm films, and therefore have been perceived as a threat to the 16mm print market. Many distributors have kept the price of video copies of films artificially high in order to encourage the purchase of 16mm prints. And there is concern among distributors about tape pirating. Running a signal through distribution copies proved expensive, but the only option is to allow your film or tape to be vulnerable to dubs.

Organizing groups have continued to use both 16mm and ¾" video—which emerged as the standard format during the 1970s—in their activities, often relying on local schools, libraries, or non-profit organizations for access to equipment and facilities. But the bulkiness and high cost of ¾" hardware limited video's potential for grassroots organizations. And while 16mm projection remained portable, the cost of prints and rentals stayed relatively high.

With the advent of the 1980s, the distribution of social issue programs in both film and video was threatened. Massive budget cuts hit producers from all sides—cutting production funds *and* the purchase/rental budgets of users. And just as producers began to develop new marketing techniques and strategies to ride out the dollar crisis, new developments in home video technology emerged—or rather exploded—on the scene. During the past year, independents representing a range of approaches and styles—video art, documentaries, narratives—have begun to dabble in the home video waters [see Debra Goldman, "Homeward Bound: Independents Enter Cassette Market," *The Independent*, March 1985]. Likewise, some social issue producers have begun to explore new subversive uses for the ½" format.

In doing so, they have two disparate models.



Tami Gold and Lyn Goldfarb mass-produced videocassettes of "From Bedside to Bargaining Table" in order to reach their nursing constituency.

First, there are the forces of the commercial home video market, which has experienced a veritable windfall in recent years. The *New York Times* [March 3, 1985] reported that Americans own over 17 million VCRs, and are expected to buy another 9.5 million in 1985 alone. Undeniably, the VCR is changing the entertainment viewing habits of the public.

The second model comes from as far away as Asia and Central America, where the VCR is changing the mode of disseminating information and mobilizing political movements. In Nicaragua, ½" Beta is widely used by the Sandinistas for producing and distributing programs which document and propagate the revolution, partially the result of training by U.S. videomakers [see DeeDee Halleck, "Nicaraguan Video," *The Independent,* November 1984]. In the Philippines and El Salvador, the idea is the same but the conditions far different. The considerations for choosing ½" video are, as in liberated Nicaragua, portability and low cost. But the repressive conditions—films and tapes are regularly censored, and a gathering of people may constitute a criminal offense—make for a whole new set of distribution strategies and viewing experiences. According to Linda Mabalot of Visual Communications in Los Angeles, Beta and VHS are used in the Philippines as part of an overall strategy by the anti-Marcos movement of using the arts to raise consciousness. For example, Lino Brocka, head of the Concerned Artists of the Philippines, who was recently released from jail for his participation in a jitney drivers' strike, has mobilized students to produce Super-8 films and video tapes. The copyability of tapes and portability of equipment encourages ½" use in forums and small discussion groups. Because media with any political content is censored in the Philippines, tapes of programs from outside the country, or those made underground, are circulated surreptitiously. Some of these tapes travel to the United States, where solidarity groups screen them in the Filipino community. Tapes travel between Central America and the United States as well, notably through the El Salvador Film and Video Project and the aptly named X-Change TV in New York.

Half-inch video is by no means new to political producers here. Community access centers have been teaching, producing, and exhibiting on VHS and Beta for years. But the opportunity to see ½" in action in Central America, combined with its new accessibility in the marketplace, seems to have revived its political life.

The organizing potential of ½" has captured the imagination of old media hands such as DeeDee Halleck, Tami Gold, and George Stoney, but has eluded some others. Says Julia Lesage, co-editor of *Jump Cut* and an independent videomaker, "Home ½" video will be *the* democratic form of communication. There are lots of video machines around just about every neighborhood. I think many radicals don't know that." While on staff at Asian CineVision in 1981, I worked with community organizers to circulate a Beta deck to houses and churches, showing tapes of national hearings on the World War II relocation of Japanese Americans in order to mobilize them to speak out at a local hearing. We would hook up the lightweight deck to an organizer's home television set. Only three years later, VHS home ownership has boomed, especially in Chinatown and other Asian communities hungry for programming in their own language, and the same community organizers held fundraisers for another cause—the Rainbow Coalition—showing Jesse Jackson's convention speech on their own home video decks.

"It's a mechanism that fits the viewer," explains Louis Hock, producer of *The Mexican Tapes: A Chronicle of Life Outside the Law,* a portrait of undocumented workers living covertly in a Southern California border community. "Home videotape becomes much more like a book: people can look at it at their own leisure. I'd like people to watch it five or six times." Tami Gold, co-producer of *From Bedside to Bargaining Table,* a documentary on organizing nurses, agrees that ½" supports a different viewing situation: "You can look at it with the lights on, stop it, control it, talk about a certain point." Gold and co-producer Lyn Goldfarb tested the video market with low cost sales of $60 and rentals at $30 with an option to buy. (Approximately 130 of the 300 tapes sold so far have been in VHS and Beta formats.) They discovered that organizers were using the tape in innovative ways on home equipment: at a major hospital in New Jersey, District 65 showed it nonstop right outside the hospital entrance for six days prior to a union election, while the Nurses Association of Washington, D.C. screened the tape inside the hospital to small clusters of nurses during their coffee breaks.

These producers are primarily concerned with getting the information out, regardless of monetary returns. Says Ian Tierman of the Educational Film and Video Project, which distributes anti-nuclear programs on all formats, "We're looking at the entire thing as an emergency—if we don't get off the course we're in, money won't mean a damn thing. We've got to get into people's living rooms." EFVP sells tapes and films-on-tape such as *In the Nuclear Shadow, The Edge of History,* and *What About the Russians?* for the low price of $55 each, or $115 for special multiple packages of four 30-minute programs. Some older programs go for $35 each, such as *The Last Epidemic,* which has sold 2,000 copies. Tierman's son Eric has experimented with a special project called Informed Democracy, offering five of any one program for a total of $55. Surprisingly, he had limited success, despite a 21,000-piece mailing. "We're realizing that there's such a flood of mail," explains the elder Tierman, "that when the brochure arrives on someone's desk, they just throw it away."

The market is far too new to define any hard and fast rules for attracting sales. Karen Ranucci of Downtown Community Television says the organization saw a sudden surge of requests for ½" tapes from universities and community organizations during the last year, mostly in VHS. Many institutions are beginning to retread their A-V systems from ¾" to ½" and, according to Joan Jubela of X-Change TV, more and more cable systems are willing to cablecast in VHS as well as ¾". All of these changes are, as the saying goes, happening in fast forward.

But some producers and distributors are proceeding cautiously. Says Debra Zimmerman of Women Make Movies, "We've gotten a number of calls from librarians and A-V depart-

ments who criticized our prices, saying, 'We could buy *Raiders of the Lost Ark* for $50, why is this $300?' It throws the whole pricing structure into question. I think home use is good, but it has to be done carefully."

Like Women Make Movies, Third World Newsreel, which distributes 100 social issue films and tapes, is also moving cautiously into home video distribution. It has developed a feasibility plan to market *To Love, Honor and Obey*, a film about battered women, in a mass-produced, home cassette format. (Third World Newsreel was motivated by the Bernadette Powell Defense Committee, the support group for a woman featured in the film, which proposed to add a seven-minute postscript to the film to update her case, but could afford to produce only in ½".) According to distributor Ada Griffin, the tape will be sold for $65 to New York State residents and battered women's shelters and $75 to the general public, with a special wholesale consignment price to women's bookstores. Will the tape cut into 16mm print distribution of the film? "No, there's always a desire for prints," says Griffin. "Also, we've already gotten a lot of mileage out of the film. It's one of the most popular films we have. So we feel that, after four years of the film's life, this is a way to revitalize it." Third World Newsreel will use *To Love* as a test indicator of video sales for new films.

Both Griffin and Tami Gold think the home cassette may be able to reach new markets, rather than compete with existing ones. "We have a bigger market, because we're not dependent on a few institutions that have ¾" video equipment," Gold points out. Says Griffin, "A lot of people can't afford to buy a 16mm print, and they can't even afford to rent it year after year. This is a way of getting the film out to its intended, most supportive audience."

Gold and Newark Media Works are developing a unique, community-based strategy for expanding the VHS market. Newark Media Works was recently funded to encourage access to community-produced media. Its first act was sending memos to all non-profit organizations in the city, recommending that they buy VHS equipment. "We tried to show them that it would make good sense if everyone were using compatible formats," says Gold. "The sentiment is that Beta is a better signal, with a little edge over VHS. But it's too late, generally speaking: there's more VHS in people's homes." Shelterforce, the housing rights media clearinghouse, is already distributing Gold's tape *Not the American Dream* on Beta and VHS, and screening it on its own VHS equipment for housing rights workshops throughout Essex County, New Jersey. "It's taken us in a whole new direction," says Steve Krinsky, director of Shelterforce. "At first, we thought that our primary users would be tenants rights groups or schools with the equipment, but now we're getting to churches and a lot of other organizations. I think VHS can really make that happen."

Many producers are still trying to get a handle on the economics of home cassette distribution. Gold does not believe the cost of striking ½" dubs is substantially cheaper than ¾". She pays a commercial rate of $20 per ¾" dub (including case). By comparison, she pays $18 for ½" dubs (plus case). But Lesage was able to mass-produce copies of her tapes *Los Nicas* and *Home Life* for substantially lower prices: she paid two dollars per half-hour, plus the cost of stock, and 90 cents for each plastic case, at Western Film and Video in Los Angeles.



"Los Nicas" was shot on ½" equipment from slides that Julia Lesage took in Nicaragua.
Courtesy videomaker

X-Change TV plans to package a two-hour program from Central America. Joan Jubela estimates that ¾" dubs will cost up to three times as much as ½", calculating in the cost of stock (a two-hour program would require two one-hour ¾" tapes but only one VHS tape), dupes, and the bulk weight of the tapes for mailing. Other producers, like Louis Hock, simply make dubs in their own studios.

Can home video distribution be a supplement and replacement, rather than a competing source of income, for the depleted pockets of social issue media producers? The same fears of market intrusion surfaced years ago among filmmakers when ¾" video came onto the scene. But the question remains, can the producer resist the advancing force of technology? After all, even Jack Valenti and his powerful Motion Picture Producers Association of America couldn't stop it. Some producers are attempting to master the market, rather than succumb to it. Undoubtedly, the whole independent field will watch with interest as the numbers come in.

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Bernadette Powell is serving a 15-year prison term for killing her abusive husband. Her legal defense committee shot an update to Chris Choy's film "To Love, Honor and Obey" on VHS.
Courtesy Third World Newsreel



Above: Laura (Margaret Klenck) persuades a friendly cocaine dealer (John Sayles) to pay for a juvenile's lawyer in Rick King's "Hard Choices," shown at Turino, which also screened Daniel Attias's "Leon's Case" (below).

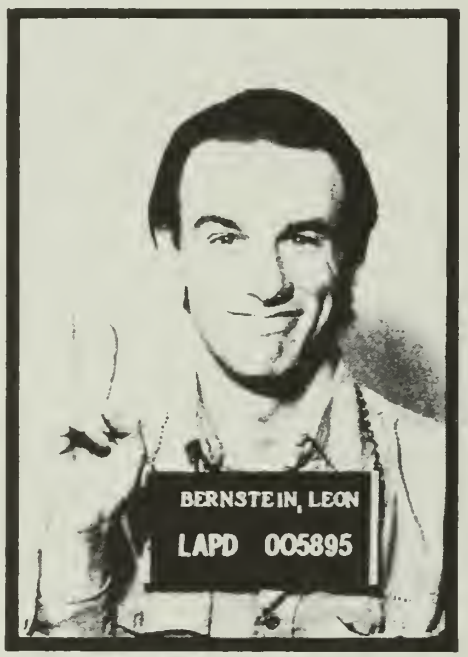
Courtesy, filmmaker

TURINO: YOUNG AT HEART

Although only in its third year, the Festival Internazionale Cinema Giovani in Turino, Italy, has become one of the more important new forums for American independents within the Italian market. With its convenient timing just before MIFED, Turino can be a useful stop-off point for films heading for sales action in Milan that need some Italian critical response. And for invited filmmakers, Turino has proven itself one of the most enjoyable festival experiences.

Apart from the French New Wave retrospective, which featured one of Truffaut's last public appearances before his death, the Youth Section, which showed a wide range of independent works by young directors spanning the globe, drew the largest crowds and critical response. American independents included Alexandre Rockwell's *Hero,* Rick King's *Hard Choices,* John Sayles's *The Brother from Another Planet,* Andre Degas's *American Autobahn,* and Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger Than Paradise,* Steve Lustgarten's *American Taboo,* Joseph Guida's *The Last Deal,* and video works by Sergei Franklin were featured in the Open Section.

Turino is well represented in the Italian press, which responded favorably to the festival. The festival, in turn, did a good job of establishing filmmaker/press contact. Distributor and television buyer representation, although not as large as might be hoped, is expected to increase this year, largely as a result of press coverage.



Courtesy, filmmaker

The Youth Section screenings were held at the impressive Nazionale Theatre, a massive cinema with a giant screen and good projection. Although simultaneous translation proved cumbersome at times, audiences were receptive. Each entry is shown three times.

Turino lacks a central hospitality area, but the festival goes out of its way to welcome visiting filmmakers by providing first class hotel accommodations and free meal passes to a wide selection of restaurants in town. Combining elegant hospitality with a growing reputation and a solid critical concern for all entered films, Turino is a veritable feast for those lucky enough to attend. Selection is largely by invitation, although festival director Giovanni Rondolino (a well-known critic in his own right) is open to all independent cinema with a bold and innovative flavor. *—Paul Smart*

The festival is interested in shorts and features by young filmmakers. Formats: 16, 35mm, ¾". Festival dates: Oct 12–20. Contact: Festival International Cinema Giovanni, Piazza San Carlo 161, 10123 Turino, Italy; tel. (39) 11 547 171; U.S. contact: Guido Chiesa, (718) 961-3517; or send SASE to AIVF.

Paul Smart is vice-president of Mirror Films, producer of Cheat'n Heart, and former associate director of the Independent Feature Project.

LOCARNO VIDEO: EXPERIENCING TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

Locarno is one of the oldest video festivals in Europe. Initially affiliated with the Locarno Film Festival, in 1980 it broke off as an independent entity, acording to festival founder and director Rinaldo Biona, due to "differences in priorities and interests." Last year's festival included over 100 tapes gathered by curators from 14 countries, a series of morning colloquia, and three distinct competitions. Participants included Christine Van Assche of the Centre Pompidou in Paris, Helmut Friedl from the Lehnbachaus in Munich, Barbara London from New York's Museum of Modern Art, Tom Van Vliet of World Wide Video/The Hague, Guadeloupe Echeverria from the San Sebastian Film and Video Festival, and Jean Marie Duhard from the Montbeliard Video Festival. There did not appear to be any attempt to interest a local public or give producers an opportunity to discuss their work. As a result the festival had the feel of a private jamboree for international video exhibitors.

Screenings were held over eight days in a large

parlor filed with approximately 200 straight-backed chairs. Four tri-standard monitors were set up to accommodate the overflowing audience. August in Locarno was hot and humid; curtains were drawn over the large parlor windows to keep the light from reflecting off the monitors, cutting off virtually all ventilation to the room. Audience members with even the highest discomfort thresholds were seriously taxed in trying to concentrate on the work.

Programs were presented by nation; three countries were usually represented per day. Although this method is common and practical, it's never the most insightful way to present work, particularly for an audience familiar with the medium. A few late afternoon programs that crossed national borders were screened in an effort to explore aesthetic issues. There was no catalogue, and little other printed information was available at the time of the screenings. Tapes were screened from 2:30 in the afternoon until approximately 8:00 p.m., with intervals long enough only to change tapes and introduce each work. Programs always ran late, and Michael Klier's highly anticipated *En Passant,* an 80-minute piece scheduled for 6 p.m., was nearly interrupted half-way through since the parlor doubled as a dining hall. Not surprisingly, audience attentiveness dwindled toward late afternoon, and the unfortunate works slated for presentation often found a restless, half-filled salon. Since the presentation of works left little dignity for the makers, it was probably for the best that so few were in attendance.

Three prizes are awarded annually at Locarno—the AIVAC prize, the Locarno Prize, and the Monte Verita prize. The AIVAC, chosen by the festival's organizing and funding committee, is awarded to either an individual or an institution for service to the field. This year's recipient was Jean Paul Fargier, French video critic and producer. The Locarno prize, given for outstanding work screened at the festival, was divided between Bernar Herbert's *Le Chien de Luis et Salvador,* Ulrike Rosenbach's *Das Feerband,* and Marcel Odenbach's *Die Distanz Zwischen Mir und Meinen Verlusten.* The Monte Verita prize goes to a young producer, who receives time at a local postproduction facility. This year's winner was Ken Theys from Belgium.

The competition was marred because it was not made clear to all the curators until days into the festival that prizes could not be awarded to tapes that had won prizes elsewhere, and that any tape submitted to another festival's competition could not be considered. The juries foundered since no procedural instruction was given as to eligibility or artistic criteria. Nor were private screening facilities available for screening or re-screening works by the Locarno or Monte Verita juries.

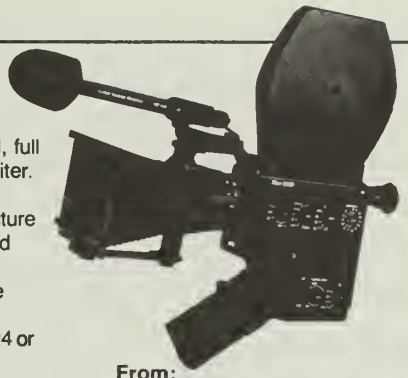
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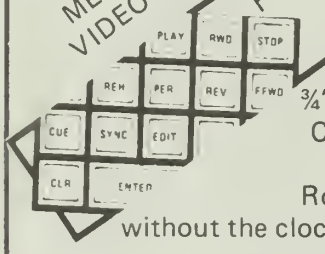
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one another was useful. But since the alternative video circuit is now well-established, fostering relationships between exhibitors, producers, and the public is a far more urgent mission. The absence of a public only reinforced the impression that the festival's outlook was decidely inward. To the credit of the seriousness and professionalism of most of the assembled guests, the hermetic atmosphere was distinctly rejected as inappropriate to the desired purposes of such a gathering. *—Barbara Osborn*

Date: August. Contact: Rinaldo Bionda, Locarno Video Festival, PO Box 434, CH6600 Locarno, Switzerland; tel. (41) 93 31 22 10.

Barbara Osborn works for The Kitchen's video program.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement,** and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

● *BUMBERSHOOT FILM FESTIVAL,* Seattle, Aug. 30–Sept. 2. Held in conjunction with Seattle's largest art festival, this juried event is open to filmmakers from WA, OR, ID, AK, and British Columbia. About 40 works were submitted last year for inclusion in a 3-hour program of short films. The festival pays $3.75 per minute. Works are screened in a 900-seat Seattle theater to an SRO crowd. Documentaries, animation, & humorous films predominate. Deadline: Aug. 14. Formats: 16 & 35 mm. Contact: Bumbershoot Film Festival, 2414 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121; (206) 632-0243.

● *LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION CELEBRATION,* California, Sept. 25–29. First event, sponsored by ASIFA Hollywood and the American Center for Films for Children, welcomes films & videos for competition in categories including shorts, commercials, PSAs, computer animation, rock videos & animation for children. Formats: 16 & 35mm, ¾" & ½". Deadline: forms & fees: July 20; film & video: Aug. 11. Works must have been completed since Jan. '83. Contact: Terry Thoren, Animation, 2222 So. Barrington, Los Angeles, CA 90064, (213) 477-6701.

● *NATIVE AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* New York, Dec. 6–8. This 4th annual event showcases work by independent producers & Native American organizations & tribes. Held at the American Community House Gallery & the American Museum of Natural History, & organized by the film department of the Museum of the American Indian, the festival welcomes work in all genres & styles including narratives, experimental, animation & documentary, although the program has usually been weighted towards docs. Rental fees paid depending on length; in some cases the festival pay expenses to attend. All films & videos are introduced by makers or scholars in the field. Non-competitive. No fee. Formats: 16mm, ¾", & ½". Deadline: now to July 15. Cassettes preferred for selection purposes. Contact: Museum of the American Indian, Broadway at 155th St., NY NY 10032; (212) 283-2420.

● *SAN MATEO COUNTY FAIR FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* California July 19–28. A multi-arts festival with a film & video component, San Mateo attracts 200,000 people, according to organizer Lois Kelly. Last year, winners included Christine Keyser & Reynold Weidenaar for entertainment/video art. Other video categories include instructional/industrial, documentary, & public affairs. 60 min. max. running time. Formats: S-8, 16 & 35mm; ¾" & ½". Fee: $7. Work completed since '82 eligible. Deadline: July 7. Contact: Lois Kelly, San Mateo County Fair, PO Box 1207, San Mateo, CA 94403; (415) 574-3247.

FOREIGN

● *FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS,* Toronto, September. This is probably the largest non-competitive festival in the world, complete with celebrity galas, Hollywood premieres, massive publicity & a general atmosphere of controlled chaos. Hundreds of films are screened over a 10-day period, with American independents appearing primarily in the Contemporary World Cinema & World Documentary sections. Toronto has a reputation for being a movie town (there are about 8 theaters within walking distance of each other downtown), so screenings attract audiences. In '84 the festival screened Dina & Marisa Silver's *Old Enough,* Tony Silver's *Style Wars,* Howard Brookner's *Burroughs,* Noel Buckner, Mary Dore & Sam Sills's *The Good Fight,* & Reed & Maren Erskine's *Hell's Kitchen Chronicle* among other independent productions. Jim Monro programmed the docs & Kay Armatage, the off-beat narratives. Director S. Wayne Clarkson looks for the commecial work, & Parisian-based David Overby brings in the European selection. One of the fest's real heroines is publicity director Helga Stephenson, who coordinates the activities of hundreds of guest filmmakers & journalists. She also looks at films for pre-selection. The programmers screen through July but the program fills up early, so contact immediately: Festival of Festivals, 69 Yorkville Ave., Suite 205, Toronto, Canada M5R 1B8; (416) 867-7371.

● *HAIFA FILM FESTIVAL,* Israel, Sept. 30–Oct. 3. Director Joseph Oren spent a month this spring visiting media centers, producers, & exhibitors across the U.S., looking for films for the 2nd edition of this event. In '84, he showed about 40 int'l features, with an emphasis on commercial productions headed for release in Israel. Oren has already picked *The Times of Harvey Milk,* & is gunning for *Blood Simple* & *Mixed Blood* for '85, but still has room for 5 more independent features and "very interesting shorts." About 20,000 were in attendance last year. Fest pays

for return of cassettes sent for selection purposes & RT shipping of films chosen (to be sent via diplomatic pouch). Deadline: mid-Aug. Contact: Joseph Oren, Haifa FIlm Festival, 142 Hanassi Ave., Haifa 34 633, Israel; tel. 04-83424.

● *INTERNATIVAL FESTIVAL OF ETHNOLOGICAL & ECOLOGICAL FILMS,* Kranj, Yugoslavia, Sept. 30–Oct. 4. First held in 1983, festival attracted 85 entries from 18 countries for 36 slots. Work must be completed between 1983–1985. Categories: documentary, educational, scientific. Formats: 16 & 35mm. Max. running time: 60 min. No fee. Deadline: forms: July 15; films: Aug. 15. Contact: Tone Frelike, Interfilms Festival, Zrinjskega 9, Ljubljana, Yugoslavia; tel. 061/317-340, 317-645.

● *INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NOUVEAU CINEMA & VIDEO,* Montreal, October. For 1985 this festival has officially changed its name to include "video," although the medium has been well represented in the past. Dir. Claude Chamberlan is very amenable to independent productions. In addition, a market was initiated last year to coincide with the festival. Emphasis of the fest is on alternative, progressive features (as opposed to those of the more commercial Montreal World). There may be a NY screening (Chamberlan cancelled a visit at the last minute last year), but contact the festival directly: International Festival of Nouveau Cinema & Video, 3724 Blvd. St.-Laurent, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2X 2V8; (514) 843-4725.

● *JORNADA DE CINE BAHIA,* Salvador, Brazil, Sept. 9–15. Dir. Guido Sampaio visited the U.S. this year under auspices of the USIA in the interest of establishing contacts with the independent community. With the liberalization of the political atmosphere in Brazil, this festival, which is political in nature, may have an opportunity to expand. For the 1st time in '85, they are inviting submissions from outside South America, including the U.S. Work which is not in Spanish or Portuguese shown in the Information Section. Sampaio is interested in social issue & political films. Formats: 16, 35mm & ¾". Categories: animation, documentary, fiction, & experimental. Max. running time: 60 min. Free accommodations for producers who attend. Deadline: applications: June 15; work: July 1. Contact: Jornada De Cinea De Bahia, Ave. Araujo Pinho 32, Canela-Salvador-Bahia, Brazil CEP 40,000; tel. 247 9106, 237 1429. The application is in Portuguese (avail. at AIVF—send SASE). Films will sent through diplomatic pouch through the Brazilian Embassy.

● *MANNHEIM INTERNATIONAL FILMWEEK,* Germany, October. Now in its 34th year, this festival is a well-established showcase for documentaries, first features, & experimental shorts. Directors Hans Maier & Fee Vaillant usually visit AIVF to make a selection of U.S. work, which is shipped en masse from this office at the expense of the festival. Last year Alf Bold, visiting NY as the guest programmer at the Collective for Living Cinema, made the selection. Chosen from among the 50 works screened here were Kathleen Dowdy's feature *Blue Heaven,* Nina Menkas's experimental narrative *The Great Sadness of Zohara,* the 40-min. avant-garde *Typography/Surface Writing* by Jeffrey Skoller, & Robert Mackover & Catherine Pozzo di Borgo's doc *The Great Weirton Steal.* 5 cash awards are given by an international jury. Formats: 16 & 35mm; premieres preferred. Deadline: Aug. Contact: International Filmweek Mannheim, Stadt Mannheim, Rathaus E 5, D-6800, Mannheim 1, W. Germany; tel. (0621) 293-2745; telex: 463 423. Send SASE to AIVF for further information, & watch this column.

● *NYON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* Switzerland, Oct. 12–19. 12 of the 56 films shown in the international program of this competitive documentary festival were U.S. productions. Director Erika de Hadeln & her husband Moritz, director of the Berlin Film Festival, usually visit the U.S. over the summer to select films. Emphasis is on social & political issues; running times usually in the 30, 60 & 90-min. range. Formats: 16 & 35mm. For info contact: Gordon Hitchens, 214 W. 85th St. #3W, NY, NY 10024; (212) 877-6856; or: Nyon International Film Festival, Case Postale 98, CH-1260 Nyon, Switzerland; tel. (022) 616060; telex 28163 elef ch. Entry form avail. at AIVF (send SASE).

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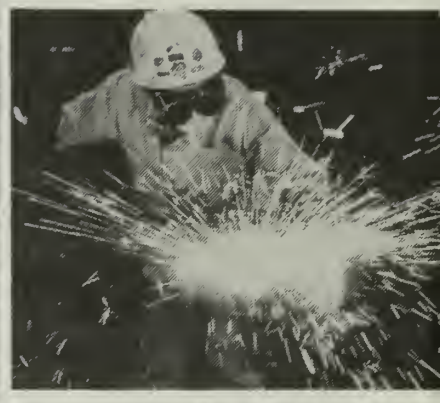
Mary Guzzy and Deborah Erickson



Mary Halawani's portrait of her Egyptian-Jewish grandmother documents the 40-day preparation of a ritual seder.
Courtesy filmmaker



Alfred Santana's "Voices of the Gods" examines the practice of Yoruba and Akan religions in the United States.
Courtesy filmmaker



"Women of Steel" profiles women who have made it as steelworkers but now face lay-offs and plant closings.
Courtesy videomaker

Film and video portraits are experiencing a resurgence. Producer/director Mary Halawani has completed a 22-minute film about the life of her Egyptian-Jewish grandmother, Rosette Hakim, who left Egypt in 1962 (a time of rising Egyptian nationalism) and now resides in Brooklyn. **I Miss the Sun** follows Hakim as she proceeds through a 40-day preparation for the Egyptian-Jewish seder ritual. The film will be screened in the Museum of Modern Art's What's Happening series on June 6 at 3 and 6 pm. It was broadcast on New York's WNET-13 in April.

Robin Schanzenbach's video, **Doris Chase: Portrait of an Artist,** was selected for the 1985 Berlin International Film Festival and will be broadcast on PBS in September. The half-hour documentary explores Chase's personal and artistic evolution throughout a 30-year career encompassing painting, sculpting, filmmaking and video art. The tape includes archival as well as present day footage of the artist at work, shot by Global Village's Julie Gustafson.

Independent producer and English professor Joel Foreman has completed two documentary video portraits. **Rita Mae Brown: A Portrait,** about the controversial author of *Rubyfruit Jungle,* is aimed at educational and cable TV audiences. **Absence of Presence** attempts to make the philosophical views of twentieth-century thinker Stanley Fish comprehensible to a wide audience. Foreman also produced *William Styron: A Portrait* and the public television series *Women's Work.*

Further down the road is **The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg,** slated for release in 1986. Project director Jerry Aronson is engaged in the colossal task of collecting existing footage of Ginsberg and the Beat Generation for the first comprehensive documentary on the American poet/activist. Partial funding for *Ginsberg* has been secured from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Colorado Humanities Program, the Boulder Arts Council, and the Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities.

Women of Steel, produced by Mon Valley Media of Pittsburgh, profiles three local women who left the "pink collar ghetto" of traditional low-paying jobs in the 1970s to work in the steel industry. Ten years later, mill closings have pushed thousands of women out of their jobs and back into poverty. This organizer's video suggests possible means of rebuilding and strengthening the equal opportunity movement.

Young urban families and the elderly have been hardest hit by the spreading housing crisis in this country. But in Tami Gold's 30-minute video, **Not the American Dream,** suburban New Jerseyites reveal that finding decent, affordable housing is no longer just an inner city problem. Developers, housing experts, and bankers also present their views.

Producer/director Alfred Santana examines two traditional African religions, Yoruba and Akan, as they are practiced in the United States, in his new 60-minute film, **Voices of the Gods.** Shot in South Carolina, Virginia, and Washington, DC, the film depicts ancient religions as a source of power and strength for New World practitioners.

Set to Bolivian music and electronic sounds, **12 November** documents the 1983 protest march against Central American intervention in Washington, DC. The nine-minute, black-and-white film by Bill Simonett recently appeared at the U.S. Film Festival and the Global Village Documentary Festival.

Witness to War: Dr. Charlie Clements is the story of one man's moral metamorphosis from Air Force pilot in Vietnam to doctor behind rebel lines in El Salvador. The 30-minute, 16mm film, directed by Deborah Shaffer, has been screened at numerous festivals, including New Directors, Big Muddy, and Filmex, and will be shown at the Sydney Film Festival this month.

From Heart Productions of Minneapolis comes **Survivors: The Blues Today,** a 103-minute, 35mm color documentary filmed during a three-day concert in St. Paul, Minnesota. The film features candid interviews and performances by blues veterans Nick Gravenites and John Cipollina, John Lee Hooker, Valerie Wellington, and Willie and the Bees, among others. It was produced by Cork Marcheschi and directed by Marcheschi and Robert Schwartz.

Producer Roy Frumkes, director Michael Apostolina, and writer Amy Taubin are collaborating on their first feature, **Dance All Out,** currently in production in New York City and scheduled for release in the fall of 1985. A fable for the 1980s set in the pressure-cooker of New

York's professional dance world, *Dance All Out* tells the story of an innocent from the Midwest trying to make it in the cutthroat Big Apple. There's the struggling young dancer/waiter, his struggling actress/waitress friend, the beautiful and scheming (but not struggling) prima ballerina/vamp, the struggling and embittered choreographer, the struggling drug-addict/dancer, the struggling post-sixties married couple Will Eddie become Iowa's answer to Godunov? Wait for the premiere!

Les Levine's **Made In New York** also depicts a young artist trying to break into the New York art world. The 25-minute "video novel" is divided into four acts and uses computer animation, live action, interviews, and dance performances. It also contains four original songs by Tomek, and performances by the Arnie Zane and Bill T. Jones Dance Co. and the New York Craze Dancers. The piece was screened at New York Millennium Film Workshop in March.

In the tradition of Kafka, Ionesco, and Shepard, producer Charlotte Hildebrand explores the transformation of man into monster in **One Man's Tale,** a 14-minute color film about the strange marriage of Lilly DeLilly and the "General," a man whose heroic ambitions cause him to change into a giant lizard despite the efforts of his incredibly understanding wife. *One Man's Tale,* filmed in New York, will travel the U.S. and European festival circuits and hopefully flicker its tongue at cable audiences in the near future. Hildebrand, who wrote and directed the film, coproduced the project with Lynn Rotin. Actors Melissa Cooper and David Brisbin portray the mismatched DeLillys.

DISTRIBUTION DIRECTORY:

Women of Steel: Mon Valley Media, 5048 Orinoco St., Pittsburgh, PA 15207; *Voices of the Gods:* Al Santana, Box 521, Brooklyn, NY 11238, (718) 636-9747; *Not the American Dream,* Shelterforce, 380 Main St., East Orange, NJ 07018, (201) 678-5353; *Witness to War: Dr. Charlie Clements:* First Run Features, 153 Waverly Place, New York, NY 10014, (212) 243-0600; *12 November:* Bill Simonett, 545 W. 49th St., #47, New York, NY 11019, (212) 757-2138; *Dance All Out:* Salem Lane Films, Box 2740 Rockefeller Center Sta., New York, NY 10185, (212) 307-1550; *Made in New York:* Les Levine, 20 E. 20th St., New York, NY 10003, (212) 673-8873; *Survivors: The Blues Today:* Heart Productions, 2418 Stevens Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55404, (612) 333-4594/870-9312; *Doris Chase: Portrait of an Artist:* Robin Schanzenbach, 814 Broadway, New York, NY 10003; *Rita Mae Brown: A Portrait* and *Absence of Presence:* George Mason University Office of News and Information, 4400 University Dr., Fairfax, VA 22030, (703) 323-2138; *I Miss the Sun:* Sphinx Productions, 151 Joralemon St., Brooklyn, NY 11201, (718) 858-4898; *One Man's Tale:* Charlotte Hildebrand, 121 E. 10th St., #5D, New York, NY 10003, (212) 473-0990.

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● *FOR SALE:* Beta editing system. Includes 2 Sony 383 editors, 1 Sony RM 440 & cables. Just serviced, excellent condition. (201) 963-6075, NJ.

● *FOR SALE:* IBM Selectric typewriter. (212) 666-6787, NY & leave message.

● *FOR SALE:* Arri 2-C package w/variable speed motor, 6 400' & 200' magazines, filter holders & filters, all in original cases, original Arri tripod, long legs, baby legs. 16mm CP-16 like converted Auricon, both single system head & amplifiers & double system, w/ 2 400" mags, 12–120 Angenieux zoom lens, very sharp. Nagra 3 recorder w/built-in mic for slates, accessories, adaptors, all makes needed for any production. Sony 1640 video camera w/ aluminum case, batteries, cables. Sony 4800 ¾" video recorder w/ 3 battery charger, cables. Omni Tota-light kit w/ extension cables, 2 sunguns. Mint condition. Many, PO Box 74, NY 10025–0074, (212) 662-5364.

● *FOR RENT:* Broadcast gear Ikegami HL 83, BVU 110 w/ TIme Code, Betacams, Sachtles tripods & experienced crew. Lisa, (212) 825-8696 or (212) 267-8221, NY.

● *FOR SALE OR RENT:* Sony M3 camera w/ 15x Canon lens, Sony VO 4800 deck w/ BVU modification. Both mint condition, under 50 hrs. use. Sale, $7,900; Rent, $200/day. Also EV644 super cardioid mic, $15. Jr. Pro fluid head tripod, v.g., $275. Marita Simpson, (212) 982-6054.

● *FOR SALE:* Bolex SBM w/ latest-type 14x reflex viewing, MST sync motor w/ recelled battery, 10mm & 26mm pre-set Switar primes, 100mm Schneider, 17-85 F2 Pan Cinor zoom, many extras. A useful package in excellent condition, w/ film tests to prove it, $1,575. (212) 982-8545, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Arriflex 16S camera w/ 16mm, 25mm & 50mm Schneider lenses, constant speed motor, top condition; Cine 60 battery belt w/ 8 4-volt rechargeable batteries; 100-foot daylite spool; matte box & rod; filter holder & 85B filter; metal camera case w/ felt lining; shoulder brace, $2,500 or best offer for package. Pat Keeton, (212) 662-1021, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Beaulieu 6008 Pro w/ Schneider 6–70 fl.4 zoom lens. 2 external battery packs w/ recharging unit. Tiffen filters, Tamron c-mount adapter. Spectra Pro light meter. All like new, $1,750. Karyl-Lynn Zietz, Kope Productions, PO Box 40827, Palisades Station, Washington, DC 20016, (202) 686-0898.

● *FOR RENT:* Moviola flatbeds, 4 & 6-plate, individually-owned, excellent condition & reasonable rates. (212) 873-6531, NY.

● *FOR RENT:* Moviola 6-plate flatbed. Reasonable rates in your workspace. AIVF & longterm discounts. Philmaster Productions, (212) 873-4470, NY.

● *SOUND TRANSFERS FREE:* You pay only for 3M 16mm stock ($0.052 per foot) & shipping both ways. Transfers are straight pass from ¼" w/ or w/out pilotone, 3¾, 7½ or 16 ips. Only 60 Hz sync, 24 frames/second, 16mm edge track. $30 minimum. Dark Horse Films, Inc., 213 Elm St., Montpelier, VT 05602, (802) 223-3967.

● *FOR SALE:* KEM universal 8-plate, 16mm w/ 3 picture heads & 3 sound heads, totally rebuilt, $18,000, (612) 332-5058, MN.

● *FOR SALE:* Audio equipment: TEAC 3340-S 4-trk. tape recorder, $500, BIAMP 1283 12 ch. mixer, $500, Electro Voice CS15 condenser mic, $150, Neumann BS 45a, 48v Phantom Power, $50. Phil Cibley, (212) 986-2219, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* Showchron, 6-plate (1 pic, 2 snd.) in excellent condition. Works perfectly, very little use, $4,500. (817) 461-1228, TX.

● *FOR SALE:* Oxberry Animation table stand model LC-3 w/ motorized extension dual bars model S-C. 16mm camera, lights acme registration punch, complete ready for use, $11,995. 16mm Auricon Super 1200 camera, TVT Shutter; Filmagnetic; 17–85 Pan Cinor lens; 1200' mag., complete, $1,295. D4 Film Studios, Inc., (617) 444-0226, MA.

● *FOR RENT:* 1 Sony cassette dictation machine, 1 Moviola viewer, 1 motorized 4-gang synchronizer, 1 Sony reel-to-reel ¼" editing tape recorder, 1 Guillotine 16mm splicer, 1 Rivas 16mm splicer, Hollwood solid state "Squawk Box" speaker model #1027B, 3 homemade editing bins. Rent or Sale: 1 Steenbeck 4-plate, 1 Moviescope viewer, 2 4-gang synchronizer, set of Hollywood long-shaft rewinds w/ tightwind, 1 ECM mic, 6 1000' split reels, 3 400' reels, 1 ATN, assorted sound cables, 1 set Beyer DT-48 headphones, 1 set short shaft rewinds. Susan Woll, 27 Athens St., Cambridge, MA 02138, (617) 876-5022.

● *FOR RENT:* Video Free America offers low cost rentals on all video formats, VHS, Beta, ¾", incl. cameras, editing systems, large screen projectors, computer graphics & more. Mona, (415) 648-9040, CA.

● *FOR RENT:* Complete Betacam w/ playback, Nagra Stereo w/ time code, mics, Mole Richardson & Lowel lights, video editing available. (803) 538-2709, SC.

● *FOR SALE:* Brown Nizo 148 XL S-8 camera (silent) & Goko S-8 motorized editor/viewer. Good condition. Best offer. (201) 659-8209, NJ.

● *FOR HIRE:* Beta for Ike's 79 E, J Labs adaptor, Sony BVU-1 plus VA1V BVU 20 field player, portable waveform monitor, portable monitor, Cine 60 Aaton Bauer batteries, mics, lights, tripod & crew. Dan Epstein, (212) 966-7279 or Mark Smith, (2123) 989-9361, NY.

Conferences ● Workshops

● *AFI SUMMER FACULTY DEVELOPMENT:* 5 workshops to be held around the U.S. for film & TV educators at secondary, college & university levels. *The Interpretation of Avant-Garde Film,* Center for Media Study, SUNY Buffalo, NY June 14–23. *Politics & the Media: Mutual Manipulation,* American University, Washington, DC, June 17–21. *Teaching Film at the Secondary Level,* Willowbrook HS, Villa Park, IL, June 24–28. *Film/TV Documentation Workshop,* AFI, Los Angeles, CA, July 7–13. *Directors Guild Hollywood Workshop,* DGA Headquarters, Hollywood, Aug. 9–16. Contact: AFI, (213) 856-7725, LA.

● *COMPUTER GRAPHICS AND INTERACTIVE TECHNIQUES:* 12th annual conference sponsored by Siggraph, the Assn. for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Computer Graphics. Animation, aesthetics, computer graphics hardware, advanced image rendering tricks, high performance image generation systems, graphics standards, B-splines & Beta splines, fractals and graphical work stations will be discussed. Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco, CA July 22–26. Contact: SIGGRAPH '85, Conference Services Office, 111 E. Wacker Dr. #600, Chicago, IL 60601, (312) 644-6610.

● *VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP SUMMER INSTITUTE:* Intensive 1 & 2-week workshops in photography, video criticism & book arts. June 24–28: Independent Film Seminar; Video Hands-on-Workshop. July 1–15: Unprintable Photography, Gypsy Spectacle & Guerrilla Tech, Word & Picture Making; Video Documentary Workshop. July 8–19: Personal Journalism: Film & Video, Expanded Forms. July 15–19: Postmodernism & Poststructualist Criticism. July 13–14: Int' Visual Sociology Assn. Conference. Contact: Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607, (716) 442-8676.

● *SUMMER WORKSHOPS IN VIDEO & FILM:* Offered by Fairfield University. 1-week intensive workshops in introductory & intermediate video & film production. $495/workshop tuition, or $450 for intermediate if taking two consecutive workshops. Contact: School of Graduate & Continuing Educ., Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT 06430 (203) 255-5411, ext. 2687.

● *FUNDAMENTALS OF LOCAL ARTS MANAGEMENT:* Special preconvention course offered on June 10 & 11 prior to the 1985 Nat'l Assembly of Local Arts Agency Annual Convention (NALAA) in Cedar Rapids, IA. 4 workshops on management, marketing, financial management & fundraising presented by the U/Mass Arts Extension Service. Contact: Elizabeth Adams, (202) 483-8670, DC.

● *ASIAN AMERICAN MEDIA CONFERENCE* sponsored by the Nat'l Asian American Telecommunications Assn. at UCLA, July 26–28. Workshops, meetings & screenings, covering all aspects of Asian American film & video aesthetics, politics, production,

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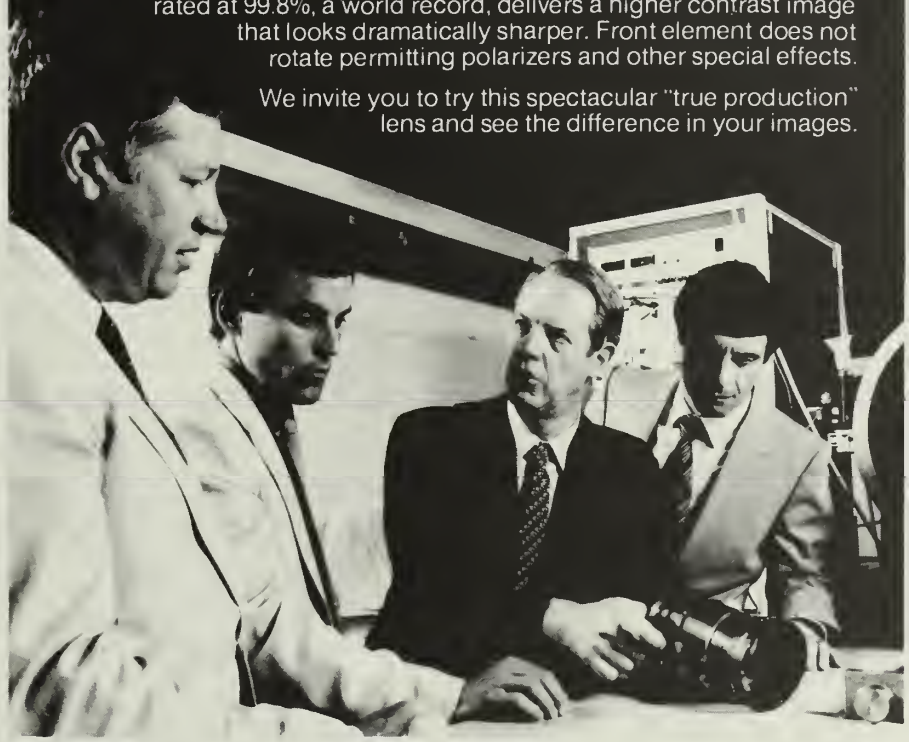
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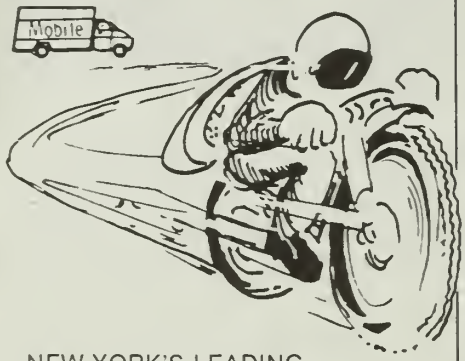
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Editing Facilities

● *¾" BVU EDITING:* Time code, microgen character generator, 19" color monitors & cross pulse, blk burst, full audio, $35/hr. w/ editor for non-commercial projects., $20 hr. w/out editor. Soho area. Current Media, (212) 219-8746, NY.

● *16MM & 35MM NEG MATCHING:* Accurate & clean. Andre, Intro-EX, (212) 265-1191 or 581-3950, NY.

● *SONY TYPE 5 FAST SEARCH EDITING:* W/NW Chicago suburbs, well-maintained 5950/44/5850 system, Sony dub mode (copy looks just like master), Pro-detail enhancement for ½" dubs, color insert camera, b/w key camera, Sony 6 ch. stereo mixer, Parametric & Graphic equalization, VO mic & hi-fi stereo sound system. Everything w/ broadcast experienced editor, $25/hr. Dubs, $15/hr. Mike, (312) 894-8835, IL.

● *16MM NEG MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut at reasonable rates. Bruce, (212) 228-7352, NY.

● *NEW HORIZON STUDIOS:* Award-winning production house, offering creative off-line editing in comfortable surroundings. Convenient midtown location. System incl. Tapehandlers w/new RM86U TBC, 3M Proc, waveform, Ikegami title camera, CG, 16 ch. audio mixing, JVC KM2000 SEG, Chroma key, $90/hr. (212) 490-9082.

● *SOHO ON THE BAYOU:* Speckle Trout Prod., direct from New Orleans, introduces no-frills off-line editing suite w/ Sony 5850's, red beans 'n' rice. Soho location, low rates. (212) 925-8448, NY.

● *STEENBECKS FOR RENT:* 8 & 6-plate, delivered to your workspace. Reasonable rates by the month. Octavio, (718) 855-8366, NY.

● *¾" EDITING:* JVC 8250 w/convergence controller, $20/hr. Discounts for long-term projects. On Truck Video, (212) 864-5166, NY.

● *QUALITY EDITING ROOM FOR LESS: ¾"* & VHS-to-¾" Convergence Super 90, Tapehandlers, Adda TBC, fades, Time Code Reader-Generator, overdubs. New equipment, comfortable & friendly environment, Lincoln Center area. $20/hr. during business hours for AIVF members editing non-commercial projects. Also available: experienced editors, scripting, Chyron. Hank Dolmatch TV Enterprises, Inc., (212) 874-4524, NY.

● *SAN FRANCISCO ¾"* EDITING: Sony Type 5 system, Beta & VHS dubbing, $15/hr. Self-service, or $25/hr. w/ operator. Mermaid Prod., (415) 777-3105, SF. An affiliate of EZTV.

● *FOR RENT:* 6-plate Steenbeck editing room. Fully equipped incl. telephone. Special rates for independents. Bob Mack Prods., (212) 736-3074, NY.

● *¾" VIDEO EDITING* w/ new Sony 5850 decks & RM 440 controller, also ¾" VHS & Beta duplication. Editing: $15/hr. Tape stock also available. Video Deal Prods., (212) 254-3298, NY.

● *EDITING ROOM:* Tapehandlers, Convergence ECS-90S, time code generator/reader, Crosspoint 6109 SEG w/ 7209 micro-processor, choice Nova 500 w/ freeze frame or Ampex TBC-1 w/dropout compensator, Ramsa 8-ch. audio mixer, Chyron, computer graphics/animation, Sony color graphics camera, waveform, sync. gen; $80/hr. w/editor; less w/o Chyron or computer graphics. M-Y Media Prods., 2175 Lemoine Ave., Fort Lee, NJ 07024 (1 tions, personal & business events. Aline Mare/Bradley min. from G.W. Bridge), (201) 585-9294.

● *FILM TITLE SERVICES:* Camera-ready art &/or shooting of titles. Many typefaces, design consultation, crawls, reasonable rates, fast service. (212) 460-8921, NY.

Films ● Tapes Wanted

● *LANDMARK THEATRES* presents American classics, historical & documentary subjects & independent contemporary features & shorts on a theatrical basis. Interested in both 35mm & 16mm formats. Contact: George Konder, Film Programmer, 362 So. Salina St., Syracuse, NY 13202, (315) 475-7979.

● *WOMEN MAKE MOVIES* is currently screening material for acquisition to expand Latina series & lesbian film/tape collections. Documentary, narrative, animated & experimental works produced after 1980 considered. Contact: WMM, 19 W. 21 St., NYC 10010, (212) 929-6477.

● *NIPPON A-V LIBRARY:* Tokyo-based film/video archive is seeking descriptive materials w/ prices of films/videos dealing w/ Vietnam War & related topics. Please mail in duplicate to: Gordon Hitchens, Apt. 3W, 214 W 85th St., NYC 10024, (212) 877-6856 & 362-0254 or (516) 299-2114 & 299-2353.

● *WNYC/CH. 31:* Looking for narrative short films or tapes of any length under 30 mins. for broadcast series of dramatic shorts. Send ¾" preview cassettes to: Acquisitions Dept., WNYC Television, 1 Centre St., NYC 10007.

● *CATALYST MEDIA* seeks archival film/video/S-8 photos & related memorabilia of the San Francisco Mime Troupe from the late '60s to the present, for feature documentary. Particularly interested in performances, demonstrations & cultural/political life of the Bay Area in '60s. Contact: Glenn Silber, Catalyst Media, 1838 N. Mariposa Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 668-2545 or 667-0795.

● *JEWISH FILM FOUNDATION* seeks documentary/fictional films/tapes on Jewish subject matter for PBS series. Length open. Also, newly-formed distribution coop seeks independently-produced films/tapes for any or all markets. Contact: Mimi Rosenbush or Beverly Siegel, 6025 N. Christiana, Chicago, IL 60659, (312) 478-9290.

● *DISTRIBUTOR SEEKS INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO PRODUCTIONS:* Speciality is health care markets, but also interested in other subject areas. Highly targeted, individualized marketing used to reach prime buyers. For further info, contact: Motion, (202) 363-9450, DC.

Freelancers

● *KIND & REASONABLE MOVING COMPANY:* Production asst. w/ van, $175/day. Weekly & hourly rates. Household, airport, commercial. (212) 929-3570, NY.

● *PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/CAMERAMAN:* Ikegami 77, production of your corporate organizational documentary, $350/day. References on request for local & syndicated cablecasts. P. Greg Alland, (212) 420-0953, NY.

● *MUSIC VIDEO PRODUCER/EDITOR:* Award-winning video producer & music video seminar instructor at the Center for New TV, Chicago, interested in working on creative video/film projects. Show reel & portfolio available. Donald Howze, (312) 846-6199, IL.

● *VIDEOGRAPHERS:* Inspired & reasonable ½" VHS recording performances., rehearsals, celebra-

tions, person & business events. Aline Mare/Bradley Eros, (718) 237-9211, NY.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER, EX-DANCER:* Specializing in documentation of & collaboration on dance projects. ¾" or ½" production, color camera. Performance: $150. Rehearsal: $100 excluding tape. Penny Ward/Video, (212) 228-1427, NY.

● *AWARD-WINNING COMPOSER:* Interested in working w/ independent filmmakers. Extensive Broadway & off-Broadway credits incl. premieres by Tennessee Williams, Lanford Wilson, Marsha Norman; has scored films for PBS & CBS-Cable. Norman L. Berman, (212) 242-7293, NY.

● *SAN FRANCISCO GAFFER AVAILABLE:* Also dolly grip & 2nd unit camera operator. Docs, industrials, commercials, features. NABET 15. In partnership with IATSE 659 camerawoman Caris Palm at Sobrante Studios. Steve Shriver, (415) 222-7377, CA.

● *EMMY AWARD-WINNING PRODUCER/DIRECTOR* available for production, consulting, project management. 15 yrs. experience in all aspects of public broadcast & commercial TV production. Will work on project basis using your resources, or will provide outside resources to fill your needs. Ted, (617) 574-0677 or (207) 773-7005, MA.

● *WRITER:* Member WGA East, available also as editorial copy consultant, proposal or treatment writer, researcher or writer-producer. Experience in dramatic, industrials, docs & shorts. Allen Tobias, (718) 875-6198, NY.

● *STILL PHOTOGRAPHER/PROD. ASST:* Very experienced. Photos published regularly in a variety of editorial publications. Interested in entry level &/or still photo position in documentary productions. Mark Sands, (212) 288-6152, NY.

● *SCRIPTWRITERS:* For *The New Literacy* & upcoming *The Mechanical Universe* computer/science TV series on PBS available for video/film projects nationwide. Also seek interactive video producers interested in securing industry/goverment A-V training contracts. Over 20 years experience. Robert Steel, (818) 363-0272 or Richard Bellikoff, (213) 381-7769, CA.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER:* W/ 16 & Super 16mm Aaton package, available for low budget high quality 16 & 35mm features. Igor, (212) 794-2011, NY.

● *LOCATION SCOUT* available to scout any location in 5 boros of NYC, or any state in the USA. Services incl. photographic rendering of each location, film processing & photo layout along w/ any public relations entailed in the area. Debra Bergman, (212) 673-0034, NY.

● *RECORDIST:* Looking for work on feature doc as recordist/boom asst. No rock, no freebies. Doug Tourtecot, (212) 489-0232, NY.

● *COMPOSER SEEKS FILM & VIDEO PROJECTS:* Professional musician w/ 20 years experience looking for filmmakers who need music written for their projects. Have performed for *Mommie Dearest, Atomic Artist,* w/ Michael Franks, Leonard Bernstein, Noel Pointers. Also TV & jingle spots. Rick Cutler, (212) 246-1154, NY.

● *PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/CAMERAMAN* w/ 17 years heavy experience w/ all facets of film, video & TV. Will be filming in Europe (mainly Germany) this spring & summer. Will have time for more assignments (documentary, industrial or medical film). Back late summer. Many, PO Box 74, NYC 10025-0074, (212) 662-5364.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER AVAILABLE* w/ Arri 16SR, fast lenses & lights. Fluent in French & Spanish. Negoitable rates. Pedro Bonilla, (213) 454-8909, CA.

● *AWARD-WINNING FILM/VIDEO CAMERAMAN* w/loaded 16mm Aaton camera system available for documentary, dramatic & conceptual assignments. John Bishop, 917 E. Broadway, Haverhill, MA 01830, (617) 372-0458.

● *ACTRESS FOR V/O WORK/TRANSLATIONS:* Sample tape of my work for the Ministry of Education of Nicaragua available, w/translation from Spanish. Can also translate from French. R. Pikser, (212) 222-0865, NY.

● *FILM COMPOSER AVAILABLE:* Experienced, all musical styles. Audio & video cassettes available upon request. Tony Salvata, (718) 788-2602, NY.

● *MUSIC VIDEOS/DEMOS FOR ACTORS/ACTRESSES:* Documentation of performance art, theater, dance. Special price for AIVF members. Video Services, (718) 259-2131, NY.

● *VIDEO PRODUCTION RESOURCE/VIDEOGRAPHER:* W/assorted lightweight mobile broadcast gear for EFP coverage in IL, IN & WI. Also familiar with CO, LA, AL; has places to stay in each. 11 yrs. professional experience. Michael Clark, 405 Meadowlark Rd., Bloomingdale, IL 60108, (312) 894-8835.

Opportunities ● Gigs

● *GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP IN FILMMAKING:* Assist instructor in teaching & handling of S-8 & 16mm motion picture equipment. MFA degree offered. Remuneration: $3,000 for 10 mos. plus tuition waiver. Experience required: 16mm film production. Located 15 miles from midtown Manhattan. Apply

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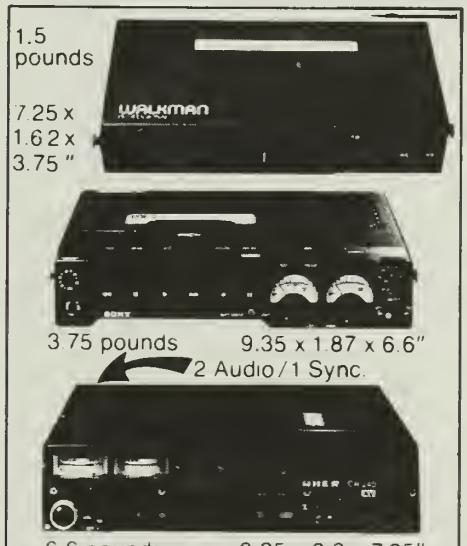
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● *SOUTHERN CIRCUIT TOUR:* Open solicitation to film/video artists for the 1986 8-day tour of 6 southern states. Submit printed materials only, incl. resume & publicity for round 1 in selection process. Panel selects 6 finalists in Sept. from a total of 40 invited to submit sample work. Deadline for printed materials, July 1. Send to: South Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; attn: Susan Leonard, Exhibition Coordinator.

● *WA. 'TED:* Original screenplay, feature-length, for possible p.oduction. Send to: Open Circle Prod., Box 1155, N. Hampton, MA 01061.

● *LINE PRODUCERS, PRODUCTION MANAGERS, ASST. DIRECTORS:* Studio 10 is preparing to enter preproduction on several low & medium budget feature prods. Seeking non-union experienced prod. people & DPs, gaffers, editors, etc. Send resume to: Studio Ten, 32 W. 31st St., NYC 10001.

● *ANIMATION CAMERA TRAINEE* sought by established professional company. Train on computerized Oxberry. Ability to handle phones a must. Send resume or call: Film Planning Associates, 38 E. 20th St., NYC 10003, (212) 260-7140.

● *PUBLISHED SOFTWARE NOVELIST* w/Hollywood credits looking for producer/director to tape original screenplay for submission to majors as *idea* for feature film. Must have VHS of previous work available. Contact: William Maidment, Box 219, Long Beach Branch, Pehala Park, NJ 08008.

● *NEW WORKER-OWNED PRODUCTION GROUP* w/numerous marketable dramatic properties, seeks skilled, creative videographer to participate in series of 30 & 90 min. theatrical video movies. Preferable w/ ½" or ¾" equipment. Payment contracted in points. Director/producer is mature, award-winning writer. Contact: Neil R. Selden, c/o Greenfield, 118 E. 11th St., NYC 10003, (212) 477-6431 or 40 Tamara Dr., Roosevelt, NJ 08555, (609) 426-0292.

● *FEATURE FILM CREW C ALL:* Director looking for crew for psychological thriller, *Murder She Sings.* We seek script supervisor, cinematographer, sound, make-up/wardrobe, grips, gaffers, etc. Great opportunity to receive full credit; must have solid prior experience & be willing to work on a participation point profit basis. Send resume to: Fred Baker Films, 35 W. 92nd St., Suite 7A, NYC 10025.

● *PRODUCERS OF SHORT FILMS* to be seen by business personnel, govt. officials & foreign visitors. Contact: Sol Rubin, Coordinator, Meet the Filmmaker Series, Int'l Center, PO Box 40, NYC 10038.

● *AFI/ACADEMY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:* For 1985-86 cycle. Opportunities for limited number of promising new directors to learn observing established film & TV directors in making a feature film or movie-for-TV. Deadline: June 30,. 1985. Contact: The Academy Internship Program, AFI, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 856-7640.

● *PART-TIME BOOKEEPER* needed by independent documentary film company, (212) 947-1395, NY.

● *CREW CALL:* Robert Monticello is looking for crew for film about the Spanish Civil War to be shot in Cartagena, Colombia & Ibiza, Spain, late summer '85. Pay & expenses. Contact: Linda Miller, Roberto Monticello Prods., PO Box 372, NYC 10014.

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● *U.S. MARSHAL'S SERVICE WANTS YOU:* Seeking independent film producers w/ experience in documentary film histories to work with Marshal's Service in preparing documentary film to commemorate in 1989 bicentennial. Initial contacts solely for exploring development & fundraising possibilities. Contact: Jerome Bullock, Office of Congressional and Public Affairs, (703) 285-1131 or Frederick S. Calhoun, historian, U.S. Marshal's Service, Headquarters, 1 Tysons Corner Center, McClean, VA 22102, (703) 285-1218.

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Trims ● Glitches

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Tony Buba for winning the 1985 Hazlett Memorial Award for Excellence in the Arts in Pennsylvania.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellows in Film & Video. Film: Jane Aaron, Tony Buba, Lloyd Richard Ellison, Christopher McLeod, Sheldon Rochlin; video: Tami Gold, Mary Lucier, Michael Smith, Edin Velez, Bill Viola, Reynold Weidenaar; writing: Thomas Cripps, James Hamilton.

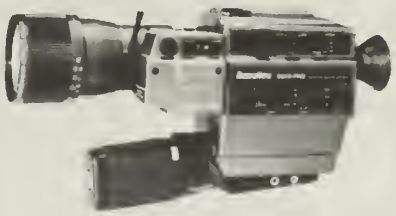
● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Barbe Miller, who received a grant from the Mid-Atlantic regional Arts Fellowship program for *What Jon Saw,* a 16mm dramatic film.

● *CONGRAULATIONS* to winners of the New York Foundation for the Arts 1985 artists fellowships: film: Alan J. Berliner, Bill Brand, Ayoka Chenzirea, Abigail Child, Kenneth Fink, George Griffin, Barbara Kopple, Spike Lee, Christine Noschese, Rachel Reichman, Kathe Sandler, Richard Schmiechen; video: Richard Bloes, Maxi Cohen, DeeDee Halleck, Kathryn High, Warrington Hudlin, Jill Kroesen, Shigeko Kubota, Michael Marton, Tony Oursler, Alex Roshuk, Tomiyo Sasaki, Matthew Schlanger.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to independent producers selected for funding in CPB'S Open Solicitation: Frederick Wiseman for *Deaf & Blind,* Renee Tajima, Christine Choy & Juanita Anderson for *Adopted Son: The Murder of Vincednt Chin,* Robert L. Drew for *For Auction: An American Hero,* Sandy Smolan for *Rachel River, Minnesota,* Richard Gordon, Kathy Kline & Daniel Sipe for *Small Happiness: Women of a Chinese Village & Longbow: The Transformation of a Chinese Village,* Barbara Kopple for *the Cutting Edge,* Charles Burnett for *The Demetria Wallace Story.*

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Jerome Foundation film and video artists production grant winners Ayoka Chenzira, Holly Fisher, & Edin Velez.

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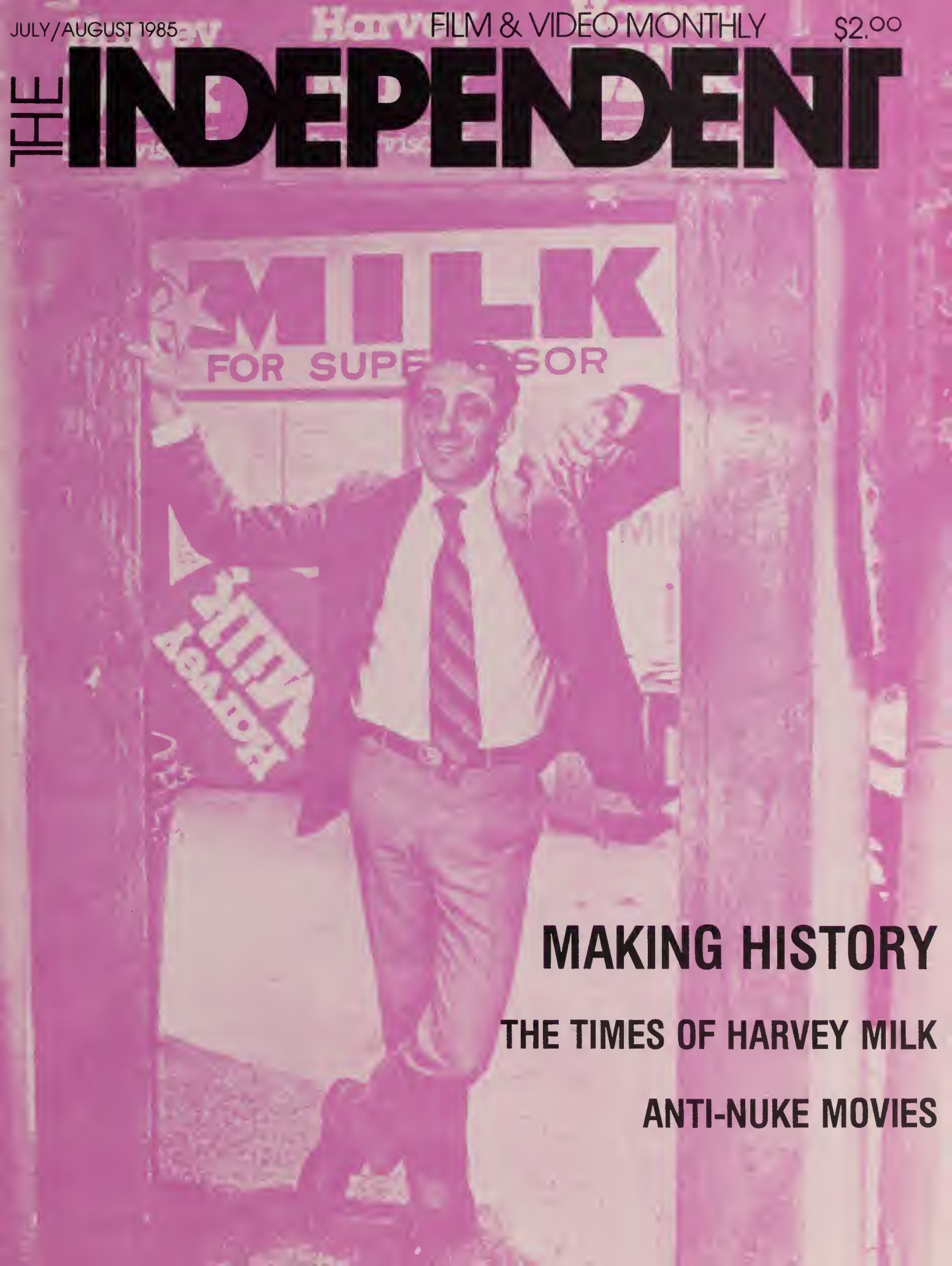
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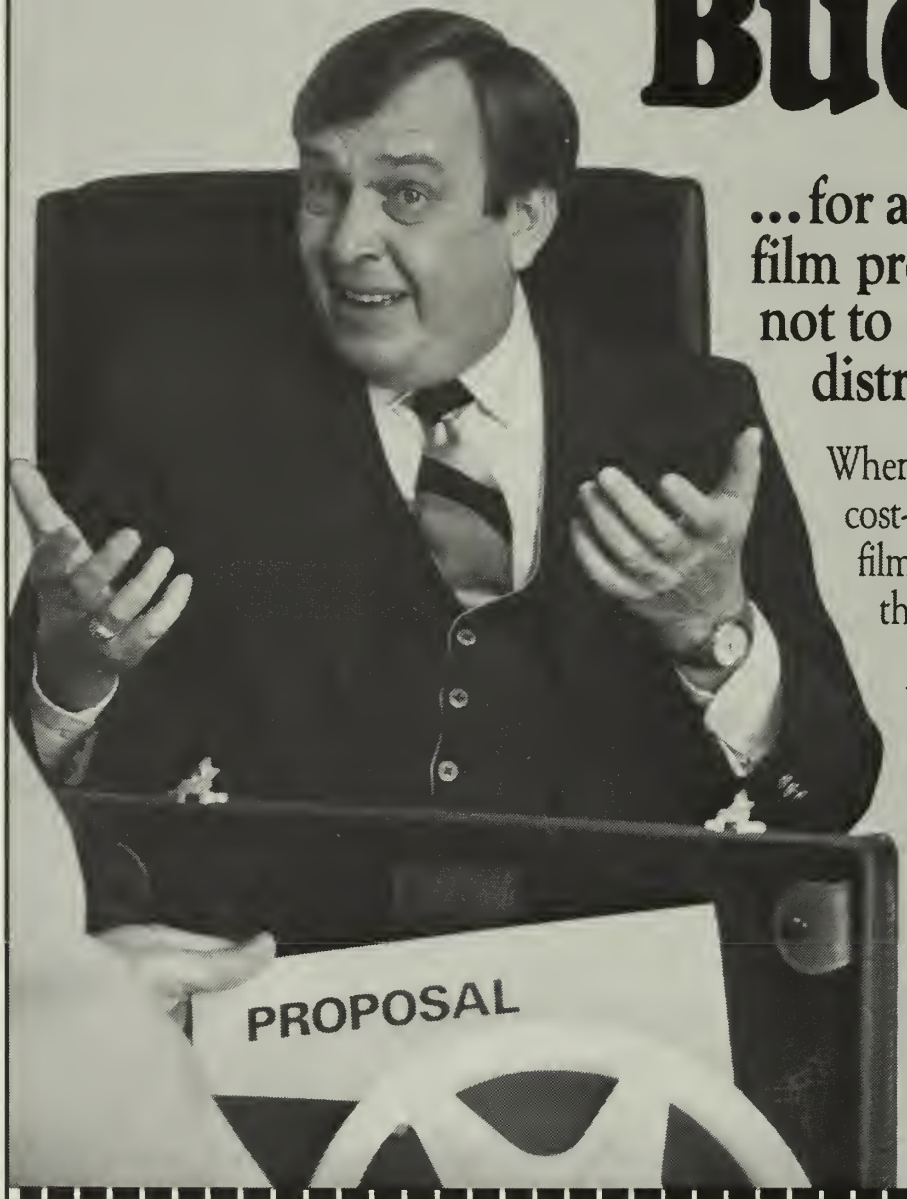


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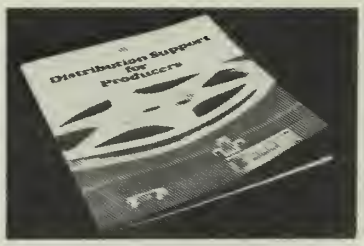
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VOLUME 8, NUMBER 6

Publisher: Lowrence Sapodin
Editor: Mortha Gever
Associate Editors: Suson Linfield
Renee Tojimo
Contributing Editors: Robert Aoronson
Bob Brodsky
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Jocobson
Advertising: Borboro Spence;
Marionette, Inc.
(718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBoer
113 E. Center St.,
Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeezo Typogrophy
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a not-for-profit, tox-exempt educational foundotion dedicated to the promotion of video and film, ond by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmokers, Inc. (AIVF), the national trade association of independent producers and individuols involved in independent video and film. Subscription is included with membership in AIVF. Together, FIVF and AIVF provide a broad ronge of educational and professional services for independents and the general public. Publicotion of **The Independent** is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, o federal agency.

The Independent welcomes unsolicited manuscripts. Monuscripts cannot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included. No responsibility is assumed for loss or damage.

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COLD WARS WAGED AT CPB

Fireworks erupted at the May board of directors meeting of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in San Francisco when chair Sonia Landau turned discussion of a proposed public broadcasting trade delegation to the USSR into a forum for a debate on U.S.-Soviet relations. In response, CPB president Edward J. Pfister resigned, calling this "the single most important issue I've faced in 26 years of public broadcasting." Pfister's resignation set the scene for an eloquent speech to the annual PBS convention, and for a stormy confrontation with Landau.

At issue is a trip of public broadcasting station managers to the Soviet Union's annual programming fair, held in Moscow in late September. Pfister and CPB International Activities director David Stewart were to accompany the broadcasters to explore the sale of U.S. public television programs in the USSR. Landau, former head of Women for Reagan/Bush, spoke before Stewart began his report. "As an institution, [CPB] is not influenced by the White House or Congress," she said. "I don't think we should be influenced by the Kremlin." She introduced a resolution withdrawing CPB from the trip.

"I see no problem with showing little creatures grazing on the tundra," remarked Richard Brookhiser, senior editor at William Buckley's *National Review.* "I'm concerned that we're becoming facilitators for the Soviet view of history." Other Reagan-appointed board members echoed Brookhiser's perception that the wily Russians would dupe public broadcasters into purchasing questionable material.

Junior board member Howard Guten commented, "If we could get Soviet television to show [William Buckley's] *Firing Line,* maybe then we should be interested in taking something from the Soviets." Implying that the trip was a junket, Harry O'Connor promised to take "a close look" at all CPB International Activities programs, including trips to "the south of France," an apparent reference to the recently completed INPUT (International Public Television) conference in Marseilles. He ordered Stewart to produce a complete accounting of monies spent on international trips, including figures on how much revenue each trip had earned.

Stewart stressed that the Soviet trip would be partially financed by private foundations, and that CPB itself makes no sales or purchases but, rather, "creates an environment in which sales can take place." Pointing out that station managers will attend the conference regardless of the board's action, Stewart said, "Our concern is an entrepreneurial one... We've had nothing but support and encouragement from the U.S. embassy in Moscow and the USIA [United States Information Agency]." Noting that CPB had already sent such delegations to China and Australia, Stewart said, "When the USSR decides to open itself to outside programming, it would be useful if American public broadcasting were first in line, rather than eighth or tenth."

The trip's fate was never seriously in doubt, given the board's Reagan-appointed majority, but board liberals fought back. Lillie Herndon, a 15-year board veteran, argued that the board was "rewriting the Carnegie Commission language that established CPB not as a federal entity but as an independent, *private* corporation. We've worked years to establish that. If the stations buy inappropriate programming, that's their responsibility. It's not our responsibility to dictate to the stations what they can buy." Former board chair Sharon Rockefeller was more acid: "I don't see it as an act of treason to engage in the sale of our programming to a foreign government."

Pfister, who earlier in the meeting had disagreed openly with Landau on other issues, defended CPB's need to negotiate at its own discretion, free from fear of interference. "As a broadcasting entity our responsibility is to go around and above any efforts that would obstruct communication," he said. "It would be inappropriate for the board to take a position that would preclude CPB from dealing with the Soviet Union in a responsible and prudent manner."

The board voted 6–4 along ideological lines to support Landau's resolution. In a closed board meeting later that day, Pfister tendered his resignation, effective December 31; the board "requested" that it take effect June 15. The next day, a packed house of PBS station managers and personnel greeted Pfister with a standing ovation. Acknowledging that he resigned because of the board decision, Pfister said, "Every public broadcaster here would have made the same decision." In an indirect reference to political interference with public broadcasting during the Nixon years, he underlined the importance of public television's independence. "It's our birthright," he said. "With the board's decision, the obligation to safeguard public broadcasting's independence falls on your shoulders. I urge you to give it your highest priority." He left the podium to a second standing ovation.

Outside the meeting room, Pfister was greeted by an enraged Landau. Before a small crowd of astonished onlookers, Landau reportedly called Pfister "a schmuck...contemptible. You've ruined this institution." When a reporter asked what she objected to in Pfister's speech, Landau said, "Everything—it's completely inaccurate." Asked what she specifically objected to, Landau retorted, "Him!" and rushed down the hall.

The incident capped a convention where tensions ran high on nearly every significant issue. At the CPB board meeting, KCET-Los Angeles general manager Bill Kobin disagreed vehemently with Landau over the prospect of CPB raising private funds for its own programming—and thus competing with the station's own fundraising efforts. The flap ended with the board's liberals defending the stations' right to raise money without competition from CPB, while CPB conservatives argued for a centralized, CPB-controlled fundraising pool. The board referred the issue to its newly created Development Committee, with instructions to explore raising private donations to support CPB programming.

In a post-convention interview, Barry Chase, PBS News and Public Affairs director, called the coming years "a period of difficulty for public television. This week's events indicate that difficulty has arrived sooner and will be more difficult than I'd expected."

Just how difficult may be illustrated by the *New York Times*'s coverage of the meeting. Landau's husband, John Corry, is a television critic for the *Times;* Landau opened the CPB board meeting by introducing him as "an honored guest, my husband." On Saturday, May 18—two days after the *Washington Post,* and a day after the *Los Angeles Times*—the *Times* finally ran a story, by Peter Kaplan, on the meeting, but did not identify Landau as the sponsor of the Soviet trip resolution.

The week's events in San Francisco demonstrated that while some PBS/CPB staff may oppose the board's actions, their power is questionable in the face of a clear conservative majority. More typical of the bureaucracy's response than Pfister's resignation is that of CPB Program Fund director Ron Hull. Asked by Landau to comment on a proposal (supported by her, opposed by Pfister) to create a single office for children's programming, Hull said, "I'm an administrator, I work for you; whatever you recommend, I'll enthusiastically endorse."

More significant than the fireworks themselves were their longterm implications for public broadcasting policy. After years of relative *laissez-faire* under Presidents Ford and



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Carter, public broadcasting finds itself with a CPB board whose majority is determined to involve itself in public broadcasting's day-to-day decisions. The danger lies not so much in politics as in polarization: Landau's actions have so politicized public broadcasting—inside and outside of CPB—that dialogue between opposing sides degenerates into bickering, and the free flow of information is endangered. A case in point: *CPB Report,* CPB's newsletter to the public broadcasting community, made only a brief reference to its president's resignation, and didn't mention the confrontation with Landau.

It may be that independents and media activists can reverse the situation only by creating a stronger political presence for themselves. One broadcasting insider suggested that only by organizing in the Congressional arena to oppose those who would polarize public broadcasting can independents halt or reverse the trend toward government interference.

—Fenton Johnson

WOMAN WITH A MOVIE CAMERA

The notion of the "male gaze" has become a favorite with film theorists grappling with images of women. For women who work on the other side of the camera, however, the identification of the camera lens with the male eye is not only a theoretical issue; it is a condition of their professional lives. Last year, a group of Los Angeles women who have invaded this male domain began gathering to pool their resources and share their experiences. Their rapidly growing organization, Behind the Lens, is part professional association, part support group, part self-help collective.

"Behind the Lens is growing more quickly than I would have thought," commented board president Susan Walsh. A union member who recently completed shooting Lawrence Kasdan's *Silverado,* Walsh represents one kind of professional in a very diverse group of cinematographers, camera operators, assistants, and still photographers. "We work in all areas," said Walsh of BTL's 55 members. "Features and television, commercials, educational films and tapes, documentaries, photo journalism." More than half are union members, and a number also make their own films.

The main objective is to increase women's employment and to encourage their professional equality in the motion picture industry. The group has sponsored technical symposia on Panavision, helicopter shooting, self-defense, and nutrition, organized an Information Update in conjunction with L.A. Women in Film and women's caucuses from the unions and guilds, and published a professional directory of members along with a regular newsletter. Future plans call for a demo reel evening and a film festival. "It's a group of extremely dynamic, powerful, go-getting women," says vice president Cathy Zheutlin. "That's the kind of people who stick it out in this profession."

"Sticking it out" has often meant the isolation of being the only woman on an all-male set and coping with the doubts, hostility, and resentment of co-workers. One of BTL's attractions is the



Alexis Krasilovsky, a founding member of Behind the Lens.



Camera operator Suzy Groves (left) and director of photography Amy Halpern (right) are among the 55 women who find solidarity Behind the Lens.

Photo Alexis Krasilovsky

opportunity to meet and talk with other women who've been there. "We wanted to be aware of each other's existence," explained Walsh. "We function as a support group. When you go out with an all-male crew, you can't find that support in your work situation. A lot of the experiences women bring to the group are negative, because those are the ones they need to talk about. But I also think it's important to share the positive experiences; there are lots of them, too."

Apparently the number of positive experiences is increasing. On *Silverado,* three other women, besides Walsh, filled important jobs. Alexis Krasilovsky, a NABET member and independent filmmaker, recently did business with a rental house she had not used for several years. As she was leaving, "the guy shook my hand and wished me good luck. The last time I was there they tried to laugh me out of the place." At the shoot, she discovered that a woman had been hired as her second assistant. "A decade ago that never would have happened."

Yet there definitely remain more than a few pockets of resistance to hiring women, and BTL members share the names of good guys and bad guys. The April issue of the group's newsletter told of director William Friedkin's (*The Exorcist*) tirade against BTL member Alicia Clark, who was working as second assistant on a non-union feature. Angry at discovering a negative scratch from a defective magazine, Friedkin blamed "that girl" on the set for the problem, although she was not in any way responsible. The rest of the camera crew were fired for defending her.

Is BTL a feminist group? "Our main concern is employment opportunity, and that can't be separated from gender. So in that sense we're feminist," explained Walsh. "But we're not radical." Krasilovsky claimed that while a number of members have backgrounds in feminism, others "definitely do not." The group keeps factionalism at a minimum by concentrating on concrete concerns: jobs and on-the-set relations with male co-workers. Although their numbers are growing, professional camerawomen still function in a world in which men have the power to make their work rewarding or uncomfortable, to bestow or withhold approval, to include or exclude. A lot of the advice that successful women in the business offer to their younger colleagues are tips on how to cope with the inevitable inequities: join the club, play baseball with the guys, and do not, under any circumstances, cry on the set.

Active membership in BTL is open to women who have been earning their living in any aspect of camerawork for at least three years. Supporting and student memberships are also available. In April, an informal meeting was held in New York to serve interested East Coast camerawomen. For more information write BTL, PO Box 1039, Santa Monica, CA 90406.

—Debra Goldman

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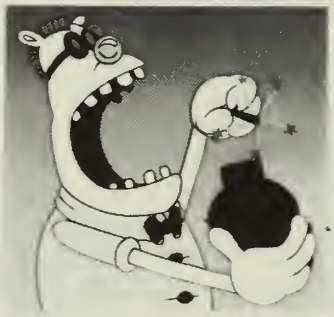


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GARDEN STATE PRODUCERS GROW THEIR OWN

Three years ago, staff from Newark Mediaworks approached the New Jersey State Council on the Arts to discuss support for the state's media artists. As Tami Gold, independent producer and program director for Mediaworks recalled, the Council's response was, "There are no New Jersey media artists. They all live in New York." Perhaps they were just kidding: the NJ Council does award a handful of fellowships to New Jersey mediamakers each year. But the dearth of institutional support is the driving force behind the organization of the New Jersey Association of Media Artists, which held its first meeting in April.

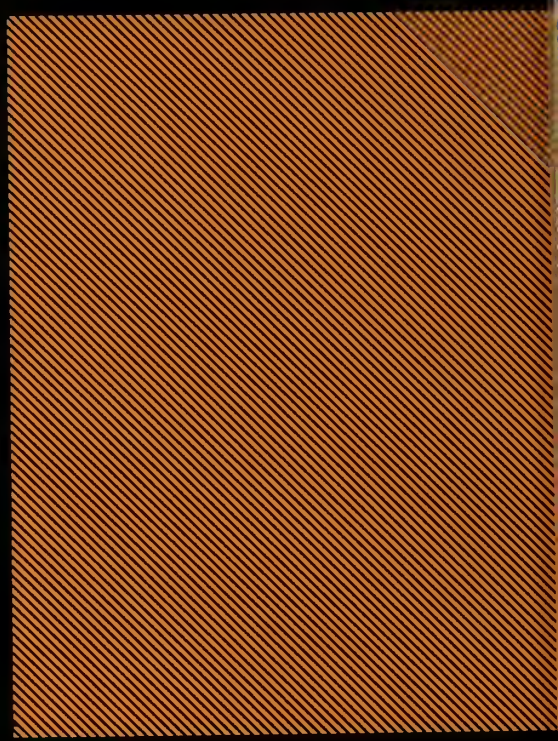
"We need to say loudly that we are here," declared Gold, who helped organized the meeting called by the New Jersey Coalition of Media Festivals. New Jersey media artists' non-person status in their home state was demonstrated to her again this year when the State Council held hearings for various artist constituencies. No forum, however, was provided for media artists, who, reported Gold, "were classified as visual artists and placed with painters and sculptors." Gold decided, "We need more attention from the state. An association will give us more weight in making our needs known."

Newark Mediaworks, home base for the association's organizational campaign, is the state's only not-for-profit media center, and a logical place for the State Council to step up institutional support. Incorporated in 1979, Mediaworks received its first state funds in 1984, when the State Council agreed to support the first New Jersey Film and Video Festival. While the Council has already pledged money for this year's festival, many other needs remain. "Newark Mediaworks has a strong community focus," Gold explained. "It gives classes and workshops, co-produces tapes with fellow non-profits, and provides access to ½" equipment. We'd like to expand our artist services." To that end, the center recently purchased a Sony 5850 deck, which will serve as the nucleus of a ¼" editing system—once Mediaworks gets the money to buy the remaining equipment. In order to receive those dollars, the State Council needs to know there are artists out there who need and want low-cost access to facilities. Gold hopes that the New Jersey Association can be the vehicle to get that message across. For more information about the association, contact Gold at Newark Mediaworks, (201) 690-5474. *—DG*

IFP NAMES NEW DIRECTOR

In April, Elizabeth Wetzel, an attorney with a background in public interest law and independent film production, was appointed as the new national director of the Independent Feature Project in New York. She succeeds Tim Ney,


FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT



who is now forming his own production company in Minneapolis.

According to Wetzel, the creation of a strong administrative base in the New York office and the expansion of national services will be the twin priorities of her directorship. At present, IFP is bi-coastal, and its New York and Los Angeles offices operate, Wetzel said, "to a great extent autonomously." In addition to the national board, which oversees both organizations, IFP/West has its own 15-member board and executive director. In the next few months, a new, local New York board will be created, and there are plans to open additional offices in Chicago, Dallas, and San Francisco within a year.

Another upcoming project is a national computer database, slated for on-line use in the next 12 to 18 months. The database will offer information on production facilities, crews, resumes, and locations.

"The LA office functions superbly because it knows its membership; it knows what they need and how to get it for them," Wetzel declared. "New York's needs are different. My personal view is that without the presence of regional films or eclectic films, the creativity dries up at the top. Those are the films that feed people ideas." *—DG*

FILM LAB FOLDS

Chalk up one more casualty in the war of attrition for New York City's film laboratories. Cineffects Color Lab has been forced to shutdown after the Bank Leumi foreclosed on loans of an undisclosed amount. During the past 30 years, the city's labs have experienced a slow decline, due in part to the advent of video and other new technologies. According to DuArt Labs president Paul Kaufman, the membership in IATSE Local 702, Lab Film/Video Technicians, has dropped from a high of 3,000 to the current 450. Over the years, a number of major labs have closed—including Delux, Pathe, Warner Brothers, and last summer, Movielab, one of the biggest industrial closings in the city.

—Renee Tajima

CABLE CUTS IN BOSTON

Another scene in the long-running tragicomedy called the "cable revolution" is being played in Boston. On April 1, the city's access foundation was expecting a fat check for $250,000, the semi-annual payment of the five percent access fee owed by Cablevision of Boston. Instead, it received $30,000. Sheila Mahoney, vice president of government relations at Cablevision Systems, did not mince words about the shortfall, declaring, "We have no intention of paying the whole $250,000."

Reneging on access and other franchise obligations has become a standard business practice of urban cable systems. The operators point to lower than expected subscription figures and higher than expected costs, both of which make for a sickly bottom line and nervous bankers. Access facilitators are inevitably the first to feel the squeeze.

Cablevision of Boston is a classic example. Property taxes have risen in Boston from three percent to eight percent since the franchise agreement was signed, boosting the total percentage of gross revenues owed to the city from 11 to 16 percent. At the same time, the profit potential of the city franchise is not as large as the company expected. Cablevision claims the city told them the franchise area had 250,000 homes. The city insists it gave Cablevision a figure of 215,000. The real number is 205,000, representing a dramatic 20 percent cut in potential revenue.

Last call, Cablevision got a vote of no confidence when a consortium of Boston banks suspended an $80,000 credit line, citing Cablevision's failure to reach its revenue and subscription goals. Three unwired neighborhoods—downtown, Back Bay, and Beacon Hill—further depress Cablevision's numbers. At issue is whether the operator can wire these areas from poles. The City architectural commission has insisted that all wiring must be done underground. Cablevision claims that the enormous costs of underground wiring are unfeasible. And to top off this tale of acrimony and financial woe, Cablevision is being sued by a vendor for nonpayment of debts.

It is not surprising, then, that Mahoney sounded so unyielding in declaring Cablevision's intention to cut its access contribution from five to one percent. "We realize that Cablevision has difficult financial problems," said Hubert Jessup, general manager of Boston Community Access and Programming Foundation. "We are in ongoing negotiations, trying to work out the short-term problems as well as the long-term ones." The immediate issue is how long the foundation staff will be receiving paychecks; available funds, including the April check for $30,000, were due to run out by the time this issue went to press. Over the long term, there are promises of a main access studio as well as neighborhood facilities which have not been kept and may never be honored. "We are interested in reaching an accommodation with Cablevision," Jessup insisted. "But we intend on getting enough money to run the foundation." *—DG*

FIRST BLOOD

Independent programming may soon be pulsing through California's cable systems with the help of VEIN, the newly conceived Videotape Exchange and Information Network.

The Foundation for Community Service Cable Television started VEIN as a statewide model program. The computerized tape cataloguing and reference system is designed to quickly

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Shalom Gorewitz's "Subatomic Babies" was excerpted for "Night Exercise" on Swedish TV.
Courtesy videomaker

disseminate information on low-cost, noncommercial programming to cable systems and local communities throughout California. VEIN's advisory committee includes independent representation from Morrie Warshawski, the executive director of the Bay Area Video Coalition.

According to Kathleen T. Schuler, executive director of the foundation, VEIN was supported by a grant from the Catholic Communication campaign of the United States Catholic Conference. If successful, they hope to replicate VEIN in other states.

VEIN is soliciting information on programming from producers throughout the country, although California will be the initial focus. Contact the Foundation for Community Service Cable Television, 5010 Geary Blvd. Suite 3, San Francisco, CA 94118, (415) 387-0200. *—RT*

I AM CURIOUS VIDEO

Swedish audio and mail art producer extraordinaire, Peter R. Meyer, has launched a new video art series on Swedish Television Channel 2. *Nattovning* (*Night Exercise*) was designed to attract video art's often elusive audience—television viewers. Meyer rejected the use of expert commentaries to introduce the uninitiated to the series. Instead, the tapes are incorporated into a "frame-story," as in *Night Exercise II*'s tale of a search for a leader of the Swedish video movement and for the meaning of video art. William Wegman's dog, Reynold Weidenaar's Brooklyn Bridge, Shalom Gorewitz's subatomic babies, and Max Almy's perfect leader are among the U.S.-produced images that Meyer has shaped into his story line.

Tape segments for each program are cut to fit the narrative. According to Gorewitz, approximately two minutes of *Subatomic Babies* were used in the program *Night Exercise No. 12.* For those who don't mind such a dissection of their work, Channel 2 pays upwards of $200 per minute for national broadcast in Sweden.

Artists can submit a ¾" U-matic preview cassette to Nattovning, Peter R. Meyer, GA1E5, Swedish Television 2, 105 10 Stockholm, Sweden. *—RT*

CPB TRAINING GRANTS DERAILED

It's difficult for women and minorities to get training for development, marketing, and managerial positions in the public broadcasting industry, and the situation is becoming bleaker. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting has drastically reduced funds for its Minority and Women's Training Grants for 1985—from $646,000 in 1984 to $186,000 in 1985.

The grants, administered by CPB's Human Resources Development office, are given to public television stations and nonstation telecommunications organizations to help pay salaries and expenses for women and minority trainees. With the decrease in grant funds, past recipients of the grants will have to discontinue their trainee programs or will have to seek alternate funding sources.

"CPB is hurting itself," claims Louise Lo of merican Telecommunications Association, one of the five minority consortia that distribute programming to local television stations. Lo says that fewer women and minorities in managerial and programming positions will adversely affect programming policies. Tom Fuller, deputy director of the HRD, claims that, in the future, training grants will be awarded based on the number of applications and the amount of funds. However, with applications rising and funds declining, it's likely that far fewer minorities and women will be trained.

Fuller insists that no training programs will be terminated. But he said between fiscal years 1982 and 1983, the federal government decreased CPB's budget by close to $34.5-million—a trend President Reagan wants to continue. The White House has said it will seek another cut of $14-million in the Corporation's 1987 budget, which can only signal further reductions for affirmative action grants. However, the Reagan proposals must receive Congressional approval and both the Senate and the House of Representatives have proposed *increases* in the next CPB budget.

—Claudia Gomez

MARCH IN WASHINGTON

Independent producers converged on Washington again last March for a periodic meeting between the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The meeting coincided with a strongly-worded letter to Ron Hull, Program Fund director, from Congressman Henry A. Waxman (D-California) that echoed the concerns of the Coalition. Waxman chided CPB for its treatment of independent producers, and recalled its role in creating diverse and innovative progamming as mandated by the 1978 Public Telecommunications Financing Act. The congressman also criticized the significant portion of national production funds that go to station consortia shows such as *Frontline* and what he saw as the weakening of the peer panel review process [see "Panels and Portions," *The Independent,* June 1985].

The main bone of contention at the March 28 meeting continued to be the panel procedures. The coalition again challenged Hull's new policy, which allocates four station seats to program managers on each panel. Waxman had warned in his letter that "the seating of so many station employees may conflict with the statutory requirement that proposals be evaluated on the basis of comparative merit by panels of outside experts." But CPB refused to budge on this issue.

Other results of the meeting were as follows:

CPB agreed to send panelists a written explanation of any staff-generated funding decisions that depart from the panel's recommenda-

tions.

CPB and the Coalition worked out a general mechanism for a proposed new $100,000 promotion fund that would provide independent and minority producers with $3,000–5,000 grants. However, the Coalition balked at Hull's proposal that it come up with funds to match CPB's contribution of $50,000.

CPB rejected a Coalition proposal that panelists be appointed for a year on a staggered-term basis.

The Coalition reluctantly provided CPB with a program priorities list that reflects the actual generic spread of independent work being produced: 1) public affairs; 2) cultural documentaries; 3) performance (reflecting regional art and performance work that is not included in *Great Performances*); 4) drama; 5) profiles/biography; 6) children's; 7) science/nature; 8) news; 9) how-to; and 10) sports.

CPB agreed to provide reports on the Corporation's minority outreach efforts, as well as statistics on independent funding within major public television series.

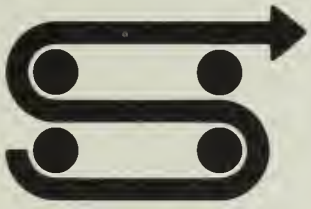
CPB reported that funding for acquisitions and step-ups (preparation of local broadcasts for national airing on PBS) has been reduced.

The following day, Coalition members met with Congressional staffers who agreed to follow up on Waxman's letter if Hull's response was not satisfactory. Since that time, Hull has written to Waxman defending CPB's record of support to large and small independent producers. Hull referred to the consortia series *American Playhouse, Great Performances, Frontline,* and *Wonderworks* as independent programs that make "the best and most effective use of limited public monies." Independents have long contended that productions within the *Frontline* and *Great Performances* series are not independent.

Hull also responded to Waxman's concerns over panel procedures, explaining that the now-defunct reader process proved too costly and inefficient, and that staff pre-selections produced similar results. He added that each panelist has the option of recalling one proposal that has been rejected by staff. Hull also defended station panel slots as a way of providing station managers with exposure to the work of independent producers.

Coalition representatives are preparing a response to Hull's arguments and may urge Congressional representatives to consider oversight hearings later this year.

Coalition representatives at the meeting were Lawrence Sapadin (New York), Deborah Lefkowitz (Boston), Julie Mackaman (Bay Area), Ed Hugetz (Texas), Carroll Blue (Los Angeles). William Greaves (New York) was unable to attend. The Coalition will meet again with CPB in Washington on July 28, 1985. Station representatives will also participate in the meeting. *—RT*



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CAT FUND: VIDEO ART CATALYST?

Debra Goldman

A growing number of video artists view television as their medium's frontier, the perfect postmodern marriage of high art and mass culture. So everyone took notice last year when Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art and WGBH-TV announced a joint venture, the Contemporary Art Television (CAT) Fund, a unique and sophisticated vehicle to realize the would-be revolution in video art. Equally committed to fostering production and developing distribution, and blessed with a three-year, $250,000 development grant from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities New Works program, the CAT Fund would create new directions in "broadcast art."

Months later, video artists remain confused abut the CAT Fund's goals and inner workings. The first round of tapes—Joan Joans's *Double Lunar Dogs,* Chip Lord and Mickey McGowan's *Easy Living,* Tony Oursler's *Evol,* and Bill Seaman's *Water Catalogue*—which premiered at the ICA last November, did little to enlighten them. Although individual tapes won individual admirers, no one could quite figure out what this disparate program said about the priorities of the ICA/WGBH program. Not a few left the show asking the same questions they had pondered coming in: What is the CAT Fund supposed to do? How does it do it? And, most importantly, how can I get it to do it with me?

"Perhaps 'fund' is not the right word for it," admitted David Ross, director of the CAT Fund and the ICA. "The word 'fund' means we give away money, but we're actually trying to get *others* to give *us* money. And we are *not* a grant program." Neither is it a funding conduit, a museum, a gallery, a TV "workshop," or a distributor. Instead, CAT is a new kind of video animal, a curatorial-cum-business venture dedicated, in Ross's words, to the creation of a "limited number of high-level works."

The development grant awarded the CAT Fund by the Mass. Council New Works program is only the second of its kind, and demonstrates the growing influence of the Bay State on the national arts scene. Seven years ago, the Mass. Council budget stood at $1-million; today it is $13.5-million and climbing. The portion of funds dedicated to contemporary artists has also increased. According to Susan Hartnett, director of the Mass. Council Contemporary Art Department, 18 percent of next year's budget will be devoted to living artists; the final goal is 25 percent. In the fund-starved video world, CAT's quarter million may go far in giving Boston, as WGBH president and general manager Henry Becton said, "a new prominence in the field."

If Boston becomes a video art capital, some of the credit must surely go to Ross, a media mover and shaker who has promoted video wherever he has hung his curatorial hat (Syracuse's Everson Museum, the Long Beach Museum of Art, the University Art Museum in Berkeley). Arriving at ICA in 1982, Ross initiated discussions with a previous collaborator, Susan Dowling of WGBH's New Television Workshop. They talked about a new variation on an old, favorite idea Ross once described as a "museum television channel." Their original goal was to redirect the Workshop, a relic of the "public TV lab" era now producing performing arts programming, toward the visual arts. But the collaborative formula that emerged called for a separate entity which would be run, said Ross, "by someone out of the art world rather than the television world."

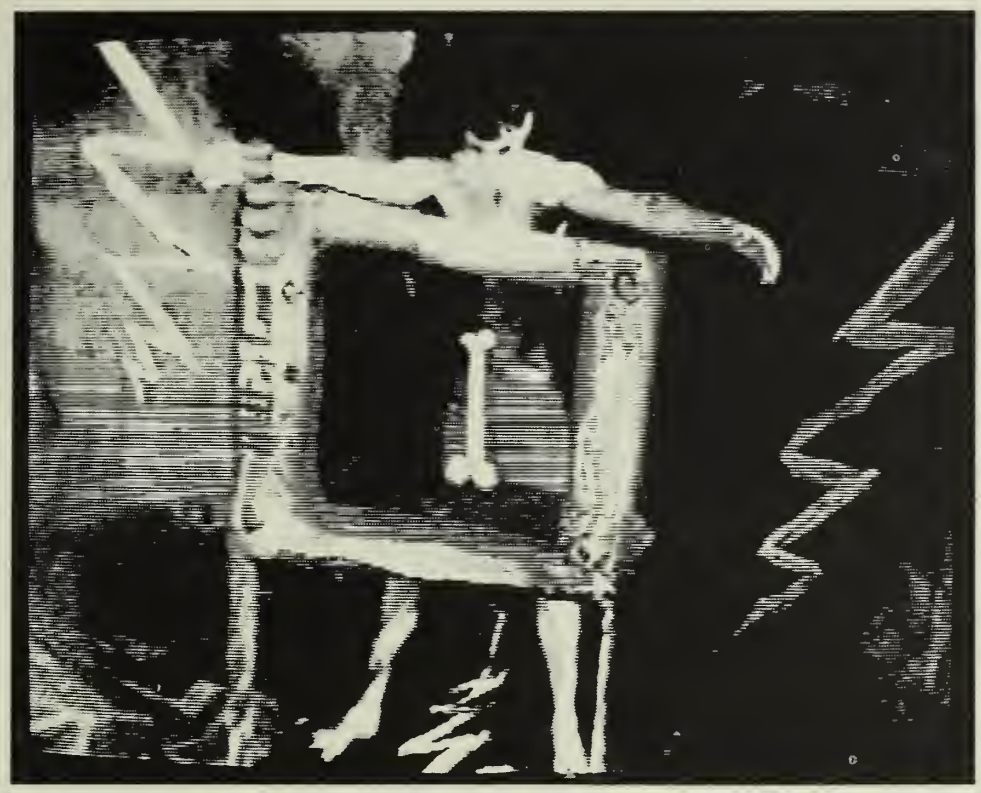
WGBH became the first broadcast outlet for CAT Fund productions, although the Boston station is not obligated to broadcast every tape, and the Fund is allowed to produce anything it sees fit, including installations and interactive pieces. ICA became home to the Fund, supplying staff and salary support, while WGBH contributes part of the curator/producer's salary, Dowling's time, and the resources of all the station's departments, including underwriting. Ross and Dowling became the co-directors, and Kathy Huffman, another Long Beach video veteran, was hired as curator/producer in May 1984.

Echoing Ross, Huffman described the CAT Fund's operation as a "curatorial process," which in practice translates into program with no guidelines, no requests for proposals, no submission deadlines, and a very private selection process. "We try not to have any hard and fast rules. We don't want to bureaucratize," explained Ross. But this deliberate vagueness, designed to give Huffman maximum discretion over production decisions, has also generated confusion and resentment among video artists—particularly Massachusetts producers [see "Media Clips," *The Independent,* June 1985]. A proposal submitted to CAT by Toni Treadway, a Boston-based Super-8 advocate and a familiar of the purple-haired, low-tech media scene, was turned down because it did "not meet the goals of the CAT Fund." Yet the same rejection letter informed her that "there will be no specific guidelines" for the project. She said that the apparent contradiction in reasoning has bred "the general feeling in the field that it's a who-you-know operation."

"It's not who you know, but rather how well your work is known," countered Ross. "The charge of elitism reflects the fact that we're not funding emerging artists. But there's a long list of things we're not doing." Huffman, he added, is "always looking" for new tapes, and it would be rare that "we would not know" of any project of significance that was in the works. Judging from the first groups of tapes to emerge from the Fund, a project can catch the eye of the curator/producer at any stage. Joan Jonas had worked on *Double Lunar Dogs* for several years before receiving finishing funds from CAT. The Fund took on *Easy Living* after viewing a shorter "sketch" of the tape called *Easy Street.* Huffman first saw *Evol* in rough cut, while *Water Catalogue* began as a proposal.

"Excellence in work" was Huffman's own description of what she looks for in her ongoing survey of the field. We're looking for artists interested in television, who are curious about a mass audience and are interested in working in a business relationship." Ross expanded on the business theme, explaining that the Fund is "being run the way the production world really works outside the art world." The staff justifies its closed door selection policy by claiming the prerogatives of a private business. CAT does not give grants to artists, it makes deals with them; it does not fund video art, it invests in artists' television. "There are no sunshine laws here," Ross declared. Outside observers regard this as secretiveness, but, Ross replied, "in choosing production parners, egos and careers are at stake. We feel its very important to make curatorial decisions very confidentially." Michael Tarantino, the New Works coordinator for the Mass. Council who work day-to-day with the Fund, would not comment on the selection process, but insisted that the CAT Fund was accountable for the way it spends public money, because it has to submit itemized requests to the Council for all its funds.

In return for its investment in tapes, CAT receives a piece of distribution earnings. Distribution deals vary as much as production deals, and CAT's percentage is based on the amount of money and effort it contributed to the finished product. It is in regard to distribution, however, that the business "model" collapses, for the profits to be made in video are still minimal. "Throughout this century," Ross acknowledged, "video art will require subsidies." But the CAT Fund has vowed to pursue every possible distribution dollar. To reach the already-established education market, CAT has given exclusive distribution rights to Chicago's Video Data Bank. Artists, who retain ownership of their work, can make additional distribution deals for individual tapes, and while



Tony Oursler's "Evol" was omitted from the first WGBH airing of CAT Fund tapes, for reasons that remain unclear.
Photo: Kira Perov, courtesy Video Data Bank

the Fund gets the agreed upon cut of all earnings whatever the source, Huffman does not encourage such arrangements.

The broadcast market, however, will be the ultimate yardstick of the CAT Fund's success. Three of the four premiere tapes debuted on WGBH in November. (Oursler's *Evol* was omitted, according to Ross, because it did not comply with standards and practices. Dowling claimed, however, that it was not completed on time. "We could always apply for a standards and practices waiver on the grounds that it's art. We might show it at a later date.") Dowling could not remember any specific reviews of the programs, but said "there was no negative reaction," a small triumph in itself considering the offbeat, artiness of the tapes. While WNET in New York included *Double Lunar Dogs* and *Easy Living* in its June video art series, no active attempt to distribute the tapes through PBS will be made until there are enough tapes to create a series.

European television, historically more receptive to art video that U.S. broadcast markets, is key to the enterprise. Huffman, who has traveled extensively in Europe representing the Fund, is now working with the Producers Service Group, a Boston-based distributor that is cultivating European clients. And European television producers met in Boston this spring to discuss potential co-productions. "These things take time," Huffman warned. "You just don't make a deal at the first meeting. You have to establish relationships."

But the CAT Fund doesn't have lots of time. The Mass. Council development grant is seed money; the last installment is due in 1986, and then the Fund is on its own. Once the development money runs its course, the Fund can go back to the well to apply for additional New Works grants for individual projects, but the anticipated absence of a large-scale subsidy has Huffman hard at work looking for public and private support. The Fund is awaiting word on a Mass. Council Arts Exchange grant to fund a Marcel Odenbach installation to which the Goethe Institute in New York has already committed support. WGBH is searching for underwriters for a Laurie Anderson piece to be coproduced with CAT. And already in the pipeline are partially-completed projects that illustrate CAT's predilictio for video art's sort-of famous names: D Birnbaum, Bill Viola, Doug Hall, Ken Fe gold, William Wegman, and Michael Smith.

The CAT Fund's lc term survival depends on its success in securin solid financial support, which in turn depend n its ability to fulfill its distribution mission. ill the CAT Fund survive? "Every year we expect the New Television Workshop to fold, and every year it survives," Dowling pointed out. "I've learned to stop worrying about these things." She was encouraged by the discipline and professionalism of the artists themselves, because "their enthusiasm creates an impetus of its own." Ross concurred that television "was a step that artists are ready to make." But will made-for-TV audiences follow?

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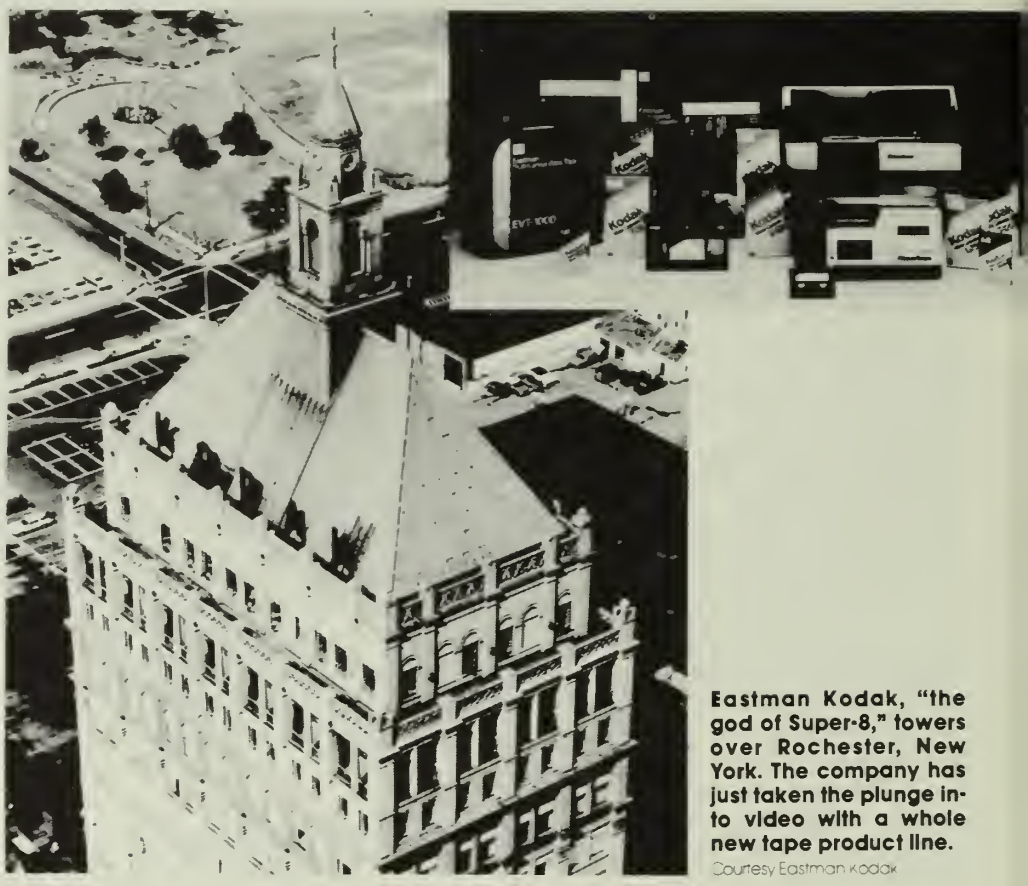
GODS OF SILVER

Toni Treadway and Bob Brodsky

Working in a medium—Super-8 and 8mm—that has been eclipsed by home video, we get a lot of panic inquiries: "I hear Kodak is killing Kodachrome next year. Is it true?" Kodak, of course, will not tell even those whose work is dependent on their products what their plans are, but they do make discontinuance announcements far in advance of actual discontinuance. Still, we check out each rumor, and every so often we make a pilgrimage to Rochester to look the gods of Super-8 straight in the eye. Their bottom line is profit, but just above it is reputation and commitment. Individually, we can't do much about profits, but we can rally their boys (yes, still all boys) around reputation and commitment. Kodak is very big on commitment.

This year Kodak seemed pleased to see us. Why? They've taken a plunge into what for them is an unknown market: video. The senior staff is circumspect; it has assigned the video products to a few willing insiders who have, in turn, hired expertise. So whenever someone comes around who has experience in both film and video, Kodak staffers turn out in friendly numbers. They wanted to know how to make Kodak video products gain greater acceptance, and if they were overlooking any markets for 8mm video. (How could they, using their saturation approach?)

Kodak managers try to pinpoint markets through advertising response and sales reports. This technique works for broad consumer trends, which 8mm video promises to become, but not for specialized products, which include most of the products of Eastman Kodak's Motion Picture and Audio Visual Products Division. Specialized products require "leads" and "follow-ups" of a much more particular and personal nature. Problems arise when a product line, such as Super-8 film, loses whatever mass market it has but remains important as a specialized product. Super-8 was once used by hundreds of thousands of families for making home movies. Now it is used by mere thousands of artists and researchers. But film sales do not accurately reflect the drop in the number of users, for today's users expose proportionately more film than home moviemakers ever did. Film stocking patterns, however, have changed radically. A discount department story may not sell any film for weeks, then have its entire stock purchased by one user. The costs and unpredictability associated with Super-8 sales make it unattractive in the mass market. So why doesn't Kodak move Super-8 into the realm of specialized products?



Eastman Kodak, "the god of Super-8," towers over Rochester, New York. The company has just taken the plunge into video with a whole new tape product line.
Courtesy Eastman Kodak

The answer is complex. Product lines don't move around a company easily. Product managers "grow up" with their products, developing strong relationships with outlets. Long after these outlets cease to sell products, the ties remain. Taking products away from managers is almost like taking children away from parents: it hurts. Clearly, 8mm video is a consumer product. For reasons that can only be conjectured, Kodak managers have not organized themselves to reflect these opportunities. It seems that 8mm video is a new area. Super-8 remains mostly in the Consumer Products Division. Significantly, during our visit this year we never met with anyone from that division.

It would make sense to us if Kodak lodged 8mm video where 8mm film has been, rather than in video departments. Eastman Kodak already has superb lines of communication to its consumer photo outlets. Most of these outlets haven't done much movie business in years. Eight millimeter video could give them a jump on the vidiots down the street (or in the next department). Super-8, as well as 8mm and select 16mm film, could be channeled to those departments as specialty items as needed, just as Kodak "sundries" are now. Two things are important here. First, Kodak already has established relationships with outlets to supply it and train its personnel. It's an open channel. Second, bringing 8mm video into photo stores would create a lot of excitement. Thirty-five millimeter photo consumers who would not be reached in video stores could be introduced to home video through 8mm. Sales people in photo stores might do much more with 8mm video than video salespeople, for whom 8mm video is a more difficult format to sell.

Kodak has shied away from introducing 8mm video at photo counters, choosing instead to go to the video outlets, where there's video sales expertise. But sooner or later, 8mm video would be sold by these vendors anyway. It seems that Kodak has lost a real market opportunity by not training Eastman Kodak sales personnel in 8mm video, by not generating a special expertise and excitement among photo counter people about 8mm video, and by not seeking to introduce photo product consumers to 8mm video through its favorite haunts. Most video outlet salespeople don't know very much about video.

Kodavision product specialist John Vaeth asked us to suggest improvements for the camcorder, and we suggested that the viewfinder be made sturdier and more viewable. We also suggested changes in the soft touch controls to make their operation more identifiable and definite. And we talked about the need for ready information for 8mm users who need help. Vaeth told us that Kodak has already anticipated this by

establishing a toll-free number (800-242-2424) and printing it in the Kodavision instruction booklet.

We asked MP&AV product development manager Bill Gray and Rick Brunelle, public relations specialist, for a readily available up-to-date listing and direct ordering (COD or charge card) information for all Eastman Kodak Super-8 and 8mm products. Currently, these products are divided between the MP&AV division and Consumer Products. Photo dealers often deny the continuance or existence of certain products simply because the items are not in their ordering channel or because they are subject to large minimum orders. If dealers want to please their customers, they are stuck with considerable work or expense or both.

We presented customer service manager Bill Neelin (from Kodak Processing) with some battered U.S. Postal Service Kodak mailers and asked him for a more secure return mail packaging for Kodak processed films. We suggested something similar to the method Fuji uses for the Single-8 films processed in its Anaheim laboratory: an indestructable envelope system.

As part of our visit, we were invited to tour the Kodak processing lab. We were told to be there at 8:30 a.m. A large portion of the Rochester population gets up at the crack of dawn to go to work. There's a lot of momentum in Kodak. Ostensibly we were just tourists, but our tour leaders knew that we came with a laundry list of complaints from customers and dealers. First on the list was the lab's separation of rolls from a single drop-off into several day's work; processed films are therefore not returned quickly or in the single batch in which they were sent. Reproduction supervisor Mike McDonald explained that individual customer's films are deliberately separated in different processing machines so that if something goes wrong in the process, only a few of the rolls will be affected. Kodak sees this as a protecting quality; dealers and customers are irritated by it. The lab will process anyone's order in a single batch if the customer requests it in writing attached to the unprocessed films.

Another complaint concerns lab-produced scratches and digs on the film base or in the emulsion. Although the Kodak lab's reputation is markedly better than that of other labs, we have seen a gradual increase in unwanted artifacts over the past few years. In the past, Kodak's response has been, "How do you know these scratches and digs were not produced by abrasive material that got into the film cartridge or when the processed film was first viewed?" To test this, we determine whether the scratches are parallel to the edge of the film or whether the digs are frame-regular. If they are, the lab cannot be blamed. Lab damage seldom results in edge parallel scratches or frame-regular digs.

The processing machine operators struck us as a well-trained and conscientious crew. They watch

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over the chemical flow and temperatures as carefully as any mortal could. They even have binocular microscopes installed at the end of their processors so they can view the film frames (via timed strobelight) before they are wound on a take-up reel. Some of the personnel have been standing watch over these machines since they were installed. (When was that?)

The machines themselves look old. The lab was undoubtedly once state-of-the-art, but declining volume has forced managers to institute cost-cutting measures, which have not included a new, more economical state-of-the-art processing suite. The faithful employees who have tended the machines so long are expected to find corners to cut. After 10 years or longer, life gets a little dingy. It doesn't take much imagination to see a roller ceasing to roll properly and thus producing a little scratch until it is detected.

Compounding the problem is our impression —gained from the lab personnel—that the Super-8 and 8mm work that comes in is essentially home movies: precious for their content, but not their technical quality. There seems to be little appreciation in the lab for the number of artists and researchers who are using Super-8 and for whom quality is very important. For a company that has made its reputation on quality product and service, this is an odd but understandable development: it's not Kodak that's changed, but its market.

Kodak's largest cost is personnel. Films arriving without proper identification are processed, identified by scenes (which are loaded into a computer), and kept until the owner gets on the phone with the lab's customer service (716-722-4606) and describes the subject matter. The lab is unprepared to deal with work that does not come through a Kodak dealer bearing a dealer number. When a customer returns work to the lab directly, the system burps and the work may be returned randomly to a dealer. We think the addition of a direct customer component to the lab would be appropriate—it would facilitate handling of the many problems and requests that are associated with processing, printing, and soundstriping amateur films, and would reflect the Kodak lab's recognition of a changing clientele for its amateur movie films. We think it would increase business for everyone and reduce costs (dealers could still be protected by charging direct customers a list price). Also, it would almost certainly confuse employees who are used to thinking of the lab's output as home m

We met people in the reproduction d ment who do the movie printing and magnetic soundstriping, called Sonotracking. Aggie Peris was spooling up a 1200' roll of Super-8 for printing when she came upon a segment of regular 8mm film taped into the middle of a Super-8 roll. With her supervisor, Mike McDonald, she quickly worked out a protocol to get the printing job done and back to the dealer. Peris's table consisted of a pair of large 16/35mm rewinds with clutched motor drive and an old cement splicer mounted on a wood base. The 1200' reel Peris was loading wobbled so far from side to side that we would have ejected it from our studio by any expedient means. We would also use smaller, easier to use, more controllable rewinds. But printing movies at the Kodak lab is not like printing at a professional film lab. The lab sees itself as making home movie duplicates; that's what it was set up for. The equipment was designed to handle large quantities of small orders, and the personnel have been trained to "get out the work" with minimum hassle. Consequently, any splices that seem too fragile to withstand the considerable tension of Kodak film handling are summarily chopped out and replaced with a large overlap cement splice, sometimes covered over with an even larger Kodak presstape splice. Voila! When we challenged this practice in person (we've challenged its necessity in writing before), McDonald told us that films sent with instructions not to tamper with splices are handled differently. They are carefully inspected, and if the splices seem sufficient, they're printed; if not, the films are returned unprinted. We lobbied for a printer that would obviate this practice altogether.

When we visited the Sonotracking room, we were surprised by the quantity of 16mm film that was being striped. We knows that 16mm magnetic sound is still popular in Europe, but we didn't know that anyone in the U.S. projected 16mm camera original with post-striping or had post-striped magnetic prints made. Barbara Street was striping film on both the 16mm and Super-8 machines when we arrived. On the far side of the room she was also running a machine that kept magnetic oxide suspended in solution. The machines were clearly prototypes. Street was not only the operator, but also the sustainer of the whole process. Still, she had the cool presence to tend both machines while talking to us. Her Sonotracking machine also placed considerable tension on the film being striped, necessitating Presstape or cement splices. Her biggest problem was splice separation during striping, causing a major shutdown. Again, it seems that the emerging market of well-edited amateur film demands striping machines that place little tension on film while applying an even oxide coating.

Without doubt, Kodak has a more valuable resource in its lab personnel than in its equipment protocol. The amateur film world has changed, and the sooner Kodak management re-equips and institutes more appropriate procedures in its once-state-of-the-art lab, the better it will be for both the company and its customers.

Toni Treadway and Bob Brodsky are co-authors of Super 8 in the Video Age, available in English and Spanish.

© Toni Treadway and Bob Brodsky 1985

ARE MISSILE MOVIES ON TARGET?



"Dark Circle" exposes the vast human destruction that can be generated by this tiny, four-pound "nuclear button." The film has been seen by more than 500,000 people.
Courtesy filmmakers

David Riker

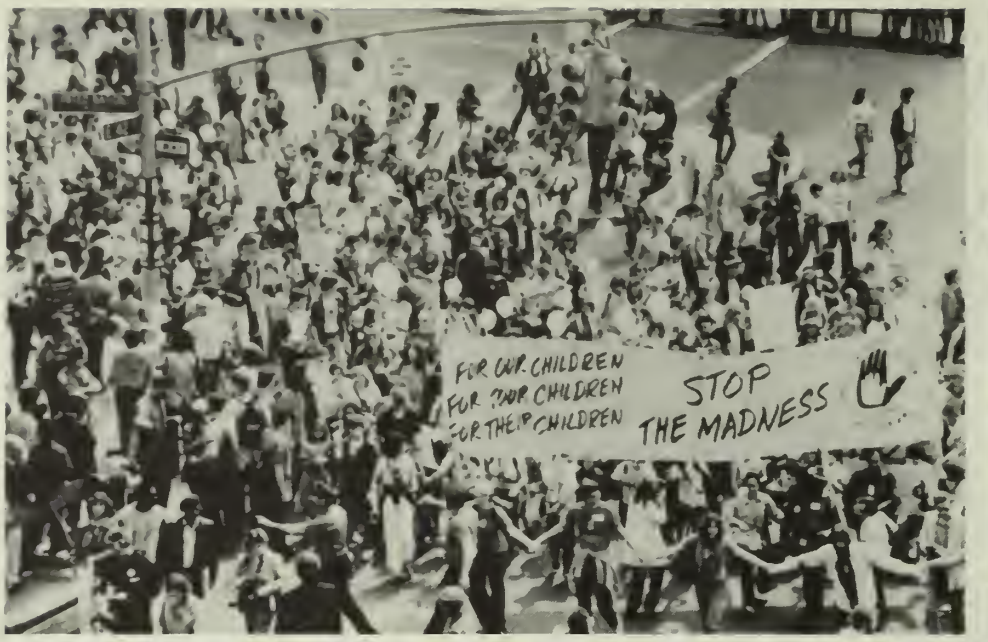
A number of independently-produced films dealing with the arms race appeared in the early 1980s, the heyday of the peace movement. These films reflected the growing public concern about the issues of nuclear energy, war and peace. Studying how they fared in the marketplace during the past three years provides a good barometer of the current state of political filmmaking, as well as of the peace movement as a whole. Among the many films of that period were three feature-length documentaries, each of which addressed the nuclear issue in a unique way: *Dark Circle, America: From Hitler to MX,* and *In Our Hands.*

Dark Circle producer Chris Beaver, who shares producer-director credit with Judy Irving and Ruth Landy, estimates that his film has been seen by upwards of 500,000 people worldwide —an estimate arrived at through the producers' close involvement with distribution and promotion of their film. *Dark Circle* is a probing study of life in the nuclear age, combining the personal experience of the filmmakers as they educate themselves about the issue with that of citizens whose lives have been directly affected by the nuclear genie. Among those featured are inhabitants of the community surrounding the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility outside Boulder, Colorado, where accidents and emissions may account for high cancer rates; an Air Force veteran who flew through a mushroom cloud after an atomic explosion; and a survivor of the Hiroshima blast, then 16 years old, now a shy but nevertheless eloquent witness to the horrors of nuclear weaponry. Beaver thinks the film may have been "lost in the shuffle," to a certain extent, as the rush of other nuclear-issue films at the time drew attention and audiences away from *Dark Circle.* Nevertheless, he says he is happy with its performance. He and the others have appeared with the film on many occasions: living-room screenings, church showings, commercial theater runs. The film has also been shown in some very difficult settings, such as the Lawrence Livermore Labs, the Atomic Industrial Forum, and for a number of utilities, where it most likely met with some disfavor. These screenings were arranged through the distributor at the initiation of the institutions or corporations themselves.

Dark Circle has received wide nontheatrical distribution through New Yorker Films, described by Beaver as "a rock for keeping a steady flow of bookings since an agreement was signed." New Yorker booker John Montague is pleased with the film's performance and characterizes its business as "still building." In comparison with New Yorker's previous hit, *The Atomic Cafe*— an instant sensation that combined camp newsreel footage with a serious message—*Dark Circle*'s business has grown slowly and steadily.

The company's primary focus for *Dark Circle* is the college/university market, where it has achieved its most thorough saturation. Montague thinks the film is a useful teaching tool because it brings up important moral issues; it can be utilized in a variety of courses, such as ethics or economics, or in studying the military-industrial complex or the nuclear fuel cycle. In addition, Horizon Film in Brooklyn, New York, has arranged numerous theatrical bookings, and has lately been selling video copies to various groups and institutions. Beaver will soon test market the film in home video stores in San Francisco and Portland, Oregon.

Producer Ralph Klein says his film *America: From Hitler to MX,* co-produced with Saul Newton, has been both a theatrical and non-theatrical success. Produced on a shoestring budget, with an all-volunteer army of assistants, the film has achieved a certain international fame through its many screenings in Eastern Europe, even winning a special documentary prize at the 1983 Moscow Film Festival. Directed by Joan Harvey, the film is a forcefully presented historical overview of the rise of the military-industrial complex from World War II to the present. It utilizes a distinct and overwhelming technique of straightforward information presented by a variety of labor, business, and military representatives intermixed with performance pieces by the Fourth Wall Repertory Company, one of New York's most politically potent art ensembles. The producers chose the route of self-distribution after talking to several distributors because they decided that "no one



Public interest in the nuclear issue may have peaked before the release of "In Our Hands," lessening its box office appeal.

Courtesy Am[illegible]ictures



Joan Harvey and Jess Wayman prepare to interview Rear Admiral Gene R. La Rocque for "America: From Hitler to MX."

Courtesy filmmaker

would work as hard for the film as we would; we felt we could do a better job." They had previously distributed their first (also anti-nuclear) feature, *We Are the Guinea Pigs,* and again utilized a large number of volunteers to organize mailings of flyers and publicity materials, and to make numerous telephone calls to contacts in each community where the film played in an attempt to assure the largest possible turnout. *America: From Hitler to MX* has been seen on numerous college campuses, in commercial theaters, and in festivals and theaters abroad. Klein has assembled an eight-page listing of these major showings, which includes the schools, libraries, churches, labor unions, citizens groups, and peace groups. The list spans such colleges as the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, and the University of Bergen in Norway. *Hitler to MX* has also played to groups such as the Church of the Brethren in Elgin, Illinois, the Livermore Action Group in Berkeley, California, and the Teamsters 111 Shop Stewards Training Program in New York City.

In Our Hands, also produced and shot as a volunteer effort, succeeded in acquiring a national distributor, Almi/Libra/Cinema 5. The film documents the huge June 12, 1982 anti-nuclear rally in New York City, using footage from 40 camera crews who were present at various locations in the city that day and in the days before and after. During the film's editing, producers Robert Richter and Stan Warnow purposefully tried to keep the rhetoric to a minimum in an attempt to make a non-propagandistic film that would, hopefully, go beyond preaching to reach a larger audience. However, Richter says he is unhappy with the film's performance to date and feels it has not yet been seen by nearly enough people. He faults a lack of promotion on the part of the distributor, but also recognizes that there may have been a general lack of interest by the public, due, again, to the rash of nuclear issue films in release. "We knew there was never a guarantee of a large audience," he says, "but we felt we had a built-in audience of one million people: the ones in the march." So it is somewhat surprising that the film has yet to make back its expenses, even though most of its production labor was donated.

Phil Rosenthal, head of Almi Classics, the division that is handling *In Our Hands,* also expresses puzzlement about the film's lack of success. He claims it is not from lack of trying. The film's New York run at the Film Forum was "a disaster," according to Rosenthal, as it was paired on a double bill with the Phil Ochs biography *Chords of Fame. New York Times* reviewer Janet Maslin gave *In Our Hands* only a one-line mention at the end of her unfavorable review of *Chords,* and even a positive review in the *Village Voice* and appearances by the filmmakers and various celebrities on the local media on behalf of the film couldn't help it in New York City. Rosenthal thinks that public interest in the nuclear issue peaked prior to the release of *In Our Hands,* so it is a tough sell, still struggling to establish itself. He is convinced that the film is a remarkable document of a remarkable event, one of the largest collaborations ever in the history of independent filmmaking. On the brighter side, he says that recently, anti-nuclear activists have been employing the film as a benefit fundraiser, organizing screenings in commercial theaters and other settings. A series of weekend showings at New York's Public Theater in June was also a good sign that the film has not yet been shelved. But an overseas distribution deal with Cori International has yet to result in a major sale breakthrough, although interest has been expressed in Sweden and Japan.

All of these films have been utilized as educational and organizing tools. The rise of the peace movement during the early 1980s was paralleled by an increase in available media for use by peace groups and various institutions of learning [see "The Revolution Will Be Televised," *The Independent,* June 1985]. Klein mentions a high school teacher in New England who screens *Hitler to MX* for her classes every semester, then forwards copies of the students' written responses to the filmmakers. He adds that the film has often inspired groups of students to form disarmament organizations. And he cites an interesting development in New Zealand, which recently refused entry to U.S. naval ships carrying nuclear weapons. *Hitler to MX* was first presented at the Wellington Film Festival in 1983, where it received a warm reception. The Wellington festival director liked the film so much, and felt so strongly about the issue, that he asked Klein if he could retain the print for additional showings. The film has since continued to play all over New Zealand, the festival director has continued to serve as an unpaid subdistributor, and Klein is receiving regular box office receipts from the small country which has stood up staunchly to maintain itself as a nuclear-free zone.

Beaver, too, offers examples of his film's power as an organizing tool. *Dark Circle* enjoyed a nine-week theatrical run in Sydney, Australia, where citizens have protested uran-





Robert Richter's other anti-nuke film, "Gods of Metal," has achieved widespread distribution, while "In Our Hands," still struggles to find an audience.
Photo Courtesy filmmaker

ium mining and atmospheric weapons testing over the South Pacific. In Portland, Oregon, a portion of the money from advance ticket sales to *Dark Circle*'s premiere engagement went to a local media group to help bring other films and tapes to the community. Beaver's appearance on a local cable station with some high school students also boosted pro-peace activities in Portland's busy peace community.

One criticism leveled at *Dark Circle,* and these other films as well, is that they are, perhaps, preaching to the already converted. Beaver says that that is not only inaccurate, but a "grave misconception, and condescending to people committed to the cause. I'm committed, but can't I stand to learn more about the issue?" Besides, the film's viewers are not just the converted; he estimates that 15 percent of its audiences have been unfriendly or outright pro-nuke.

These filmmakers all agree that the climate for nuclear issue films is difficult right now. Beaver cites the Reagan Administration's scarce funding for the arts. Klein, too, admits that money seems tighter, although he claims to see "no lull; there are still a great many people working thoughtfully on the issue." But he acknowledges that the Reagan Administration has made "singularly good use of the media" to promote its own thinking, which he says has confused or disillusioned many artists. Richter looks beyond filmmaking, and sees the peace movement itself as having been severely splintered by the rugged Democratic primaries of 1984, and then by the virtual shelving of the peace issue during the 1984 presidential campaign.

So the question for concerned filmmakers now, as always, is how best to work with the movement to foster social and policy changes. Robert Richter sees the need for more films on the peace issue, but wishes for more imaginative approaches to the subject. He sees value in films that reflect the movement, but wonders if there are films to be made that will do more than just reflect—that, in fact, will show the way, offering solutions to our dilemma by challenging our currently perceived notions. Perhaps by being more personal and/or emotional, perhaps by being more bellicose and/or threatening, these new films will build on what we've learned and go beyond information and entertainment into being real catalysts for social change.

Interestingly, *Gods of Metal,* another disarmament film produced by Richter, has achieved wide distribution through Icarus Films, while *In Our Hands* has been struggling to find an audience. Produced for the Maryknoll Fathers, *Gods* examines the moral questions involved in America's military buildup, and the personal reactions people have to it. According to Icarus's Jonathan Miller, the film has been extremely well received by the religious community because it so clearly depicts the ethical issues involved in the arms race. He says that the bulk of his sales have been to religious organizations such as the Methodist Church, which bought 75 copies of *Gods* for its nationwide media centers, and Ecufilm, a nondenominational media center in Nashville, which is also circulating a number of prints. *Gods* was nominated for an Academy Award in 1984 in the documentary short-subject category, while *In Our Hands* was completely ignored by the Academy after its qualifying engagement in Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, these filmmakers continue to work for disarmament and social change. Beaver is still involved part-time with the distribution of *Dark Circle,* as well as with an eight-minute piece he and Judy Irving produced on Karen Silkwood that utilizes a tape recording made by Silkwood. Klein and Joan Harvey are nearing completion of a new documentary, *A Matter of Struggle,* that examines various social movements throughout the country. The filmmakers met with high school and church groups, refugees, people working against the weapons buildup, and those struggling with domestic hardships. The film attempts to discover the depth of dissent against the Reagan Administration's policies and overcome the perception that only isolated groups or individuals are protesting.

We have lived with The Threat for 40 years. The present generation has grown up amidst continuing, monumental revolutions in science, communications, technology, and economics, but the threat of extinction through nuclear holocaust still looms over us. In the 1950s, Robert Oppenheimer and Albert Einstein implored our nation and the world to come to our collective senses—to no avail. The buildup continues, threatening now to spread to outer space. Perhaps this is the time for filmmakers to actively promote new ways of thinking about weapons, warfare, and global cooperation. It is necessary for filmmakers to go beyond warnings, beyond traditional assumptions, and challenge viewers to change their own lives and the fate of our earth.

David Riker, a media specialist who helped found the Disarmament Media Network of Oregon, is currently working in New York City.

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MAKING HISTORY MO
AN INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT EPS

Susan Adams

Richard Schmiechen and Robert Epstein's The Times of Harvey Milk is a "crossover" film in two ways: it has attracted both gay and straight audiences, and it has won the type of industry acclaim rarely accorded an independent film, including the 1984 Film Critics Award and the 1984 Academy Award for best feature documentary.

The film traces a series of strange and tragic events in San Francisco during the 1970s. It opens in flashback to the devastating television announcement that Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk have been shot and killed at City Hall by Dan White, fellow Supervisor and former police officer and fire fighter. The film then recounts the events, both individual and collective, leading to that fateful day. It portrays the political ascension of Harvey Milk, California's first openly gay elected official, and the coalition of ethnic minorities, union members, the elderly, and neighborhood groups that he encourages. Concurrently, Dan White's populism also finds political expression; a Catholic "family man" from a blue collar neighborhood, White runs on a platform of "old-fashioned values." In 1978, White unexpectedly resigns from the Board of Supervisors, but then changes his mind and tries to regain his seat. But Mayor Moscone, with Milk's urging, decides to appoint someone else to fill his term. Before Moscone can announce this to the press, White kills Moscone and Milk. White is sentenced to seven-and-a-half years for both murders—a sentence that meets with violent protests from the gay community. He is released from prison in 1984 after serving five years.

Although Epstein is credited as the film's director and Schmiechen as its producer, the two say their roles were mixed. The following interview was conducted with each filmmaker separately in New York in April 1985 and edited together with the participants' permission.

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Susan Adams: How and why did you start making a film about Harvey Milk?

Robert Epstein: I was living in San Francisco and had just finished working on *Word Is Out* [1977, produced by the Mariposa Film Group: Peter Adair, Lucie Massie Phoenix, Veronica Selver, Nancy Adair, Andrew Brown, and Epstein]. The campaign in California for the Briggs Initiative [Proposition 6, which proposed firing any teacher or public school employee who was gay or advocated the rights of gay people] was underway. This came in the wake of Anita Bryant's anti-gay rights crusade in Dade County. I thought I would do something on the Briggs Initiative, since it seemed to present a microcosm of what was happening in various places around the country—increases in gay activism, and reactions against it. I wanted to do something that would get at the heart of the confrontation: what made gay people's lives political? I started doing interviews on audiotape and working with a photographer gathering stills, with the idea of putting together a slide presentation that could eventually be used to fundraise for a short film. Three weeks after the Briggs campaign ended [Proposition 6 was defeated], Harvey Milk was killed.

Ideally, I would have liked to have been filming all along—doing a cinema verite movie *a la Harlan County,* which was a model for me because of its sense of urgency. This seemed like a similar situation, where events were unfolding and each event led to another.

When Harvey was killed I became more committed to making a film about gay politics and the events happening around me. I started doing community benefits to raise funds. I had shot some footage of the candlelight march the night Harvey and George Moscone were murdered. Actually, Frances Reid, who became the cinematographer for the film shot that, but I pulled the crew together. I began to pull together resources, although I didn't have an overall vision of the entire project. I was doing it step by step.

SA: Richard, how did you get involved in Rob's project?

Richard Schmiechen: Rob and I met in 1979 at the Alternative Cinema Conference at Bard College. Along with various other people, we formed a gay caucus. At that point I was working on *Nick Mazzuco: Biography of an Atomic Vet,* and Rob had already started on this film. I had always wanted to do a film about gay politics, and I thought Rob and I could work together. We're very different personality-wise, but we had a similar sense of what we wanted in making a film, particularly a film about gay politics.

SA: How did you work out your different roles during the course of making the film?

RE: Richard brought a fresh approach to the project's organizational structure and to the



The campaign that brought Milk into office was based ty, labor, and neighborhood groups.
Courtesy filmmakers

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TEIN AND RICHARD SCHMIECHEN



coalition of ethnic minorities, gay and lesbian, elder-

film's content. At first, I think we both had a very vague sense of what our partnership was. We both came to the project with filmmaking experience, and I had already worked on the project for three years, but the film was still in the planning stage.

RS: We work very differently: I tend to talk things out, and Rob likes to go away and think about them. Once we'd finished shooting, we hired a management consultant to work out a way for us to streamline our working process, to cut down on stress between us. We would have a brainstorming session. Then he would draw it on a piece of paper and I could respond to that. Then we would circulate it to the rest of our staff, so they could have some say in the decisions being made.

SA: How did you arrive at a title for the film?

RE: From the beginning, the working title was *Out of Order.* That came from trying to set up a dialectical inquiry as to who is really out of order. Everyone hated that title except me, so there was no way it would pass. Also, another film came out with that title—about nuns leaving the convent—so . . .

The Times of Harvey Milk was originally the subtitle. At no point did we ever think of doing a biographical film about Harvey. It was always about situating the man in history in order to understand why he was important. Heroes are heroes because they're a product of their times.

SA: How did you organize the material in the film—the story you wanted to tell?

RE: The events provided the parameters of the film. Finding Harvey Milk became the central thread—who was this man, what was he trying to accomplish, why did his death have such a profound effect when he was only in office for 10 months? What was he trying to do as a community leader, how was he bringing people in, and what kinds of people?

RS: Both Rob and I see ourselves as political filmmakers, but we tend to shy away from talking about political issues. For us politics is very personal and emotional. Certainly, gay politics is. We wanted to make a film that didn't hit people over the head, a film where the audience could shape the ideas for themselves. We wanted to tell a story; we wanted to make people laugh. We hoped that people would cry, be moved by it, and become angry—when people identify with the characters, that's when the story, and the issues, become important to them. In that way, it's a political film.

I talk about it as a film that's halfway between a documentary and a narrative to get away from the usual stereotypes people have about documentaries. It's probably a cop-out for me to say that it's not *really* a documentary. On the other hand, it *is* a documentary that tells a story within a traditional narrative framework.

SA: What were the other films that influenced your ideas about documentary?

RS: Rob had worked on *Rosie the Riveter* and *Word Is Out,* films of people telling their own stories. *Rosie* was based on interviews and incorporated archival footage. *The Day After Trinity* was another film we really respected as a well-told story. And certainly, *The Sorrow and the Pity.*

We knew it wouldn't be a cinema verite film. Since we couldn't take the camera out and film the action as it happened—because it had *already* happened—we knew we would have to incorporate archival sources. Rob had been impressed by how reporters had covered the events concerning Harvey Milk. It's generally important how journalists cover a story, but more so in relation to gay people and gay issues. The media is so important to gays because that's how we form images about ourselves, and it's how gay people often learn about other gay people. We also learn about gay oppression at the same time.

SA: How did you obtain and organize the TV news footage?

RS: We got footage from independent filmmakers—Rosa von Praunheim in Germany, for example—and there were a few gay people who had worked for TV stations and had interviewed Harvey. Some footage came from local television stations, but we had to get special releases from them. Ultimately, we also had to get permission from AFTRA [the American Federation of Television and Radio Announcers], and releases from each of 14 reporters and 15 photographers, and the Harvey Milk Estate.

Much of the footage was on videotape. We selected what we thought we wanted and kept extensive logs of all the material we'd seen. Then we got a video monitor and deck; and shot 16mm film off the monitor. We used that for editing. Once the fine cut was almost done, we bumped all the selected video footage to 1", then transferred that to 16mm, which was extremely expensive.

SA: How did you decide whom to interview for the film?

RE: Essentially, we cast our characters. We

wanted people who represented Harvey Milk's legacy, and we made categories accordingly: someone active in the labor community, a minority community activist, a gay person who had worked on the campaign to defeat Proposition 6, a straight person living in the midst of this gay ghetto (the Castro), a school teacher, a TV reporter, and so on. We ended up with eight people because that's as many as we could use in a 90-minute film.

We shot our interviews in three stages and initially cut the film with only three characters—Anne Kronenberg, Harvey's political aide; Jim Elliot, the labor organizer; and Tory Hartmann, a neighbor who became involved in Harvey's campaign. We wanted to be sure that intercutting these personal stories with the news and documentary material would work. With the first two-hour cut, we knew we had a movie; then we shot the remaining five interviews.

SA: How much did it cost to make the film—altogether?

RS: Our original budget was around $200,000. It ended up being over $300,000. And our expenses have gone far past that, if you include distribution.

Of course, if we paid all the volunteers, paid for the rights to the archival footage, paid me, paid Rob, and paid the photographers, the narrator, and the composer what they should have been paid, I would say that it cost at least $2-million. It's one thing to make a $2-million movie; it's another thing to make a $2-million movie for $300,000.

SA: How did you manage to spend several years on this project without any pay?

RS: Well, until March '83—when we began full-scale production—I worked about half-time on the film. At the time I was producing and directing films for banks. So, for example, I did a film for E.F. Hutton [laughs], and a film for Goldome. Rob was working as an assistant sound editor on features. During the 13-month production period, we were on salary, until we ran out of money at the end.

SA: What kind of funding did you get?

RE: There were obstacles. People didn't want to fund a gay subject—and, in general, people don't want to fund films. With individual donors, it's really an educational process to get them to see the value of giving money for a film. A lot of people don't understand film distribution, and they don't know the number of people that see films at nontheatrical screenings, as well as in theaters. So we tried to do a lot of educating while soliciting their dollars. But as the project became more solid, the support became more substantial. And we had tremendous support from the gay community.

RS: The TV Lab at WNET—the Independent Documentary Fund—gave us $100,000. We got its last grant; the TV Lab was disbanded last year. We got $15,000 from the New York State Council on the Arts, because I'm a New York State artist, and from the Western States Regional Media Arts Fellowship program, because Rob is a San Francisco artist. We also got money from the Film Fund and the Funding Exchange. After the TV Lab, our second largest funder was the Chicago Resource Center, which funds gay and lesbian projects; it gave us $33,000.

In total, we received support from seven other foundations and agencies, but we knew that to raise all the necessary money we would have to do community fundraising. First we held benefits, but we realized at a certain point that that was not the best way: it's so much work. We needed big donors, so we targeted. We did a direct mail appeal—15,000 letters on our first mailing—from which we raised $10,000 or $12,000. That developed a donor base. We used a computer to keep a history of all donors and used the same list to invite people to screenings of the work-in-progress. We sent out a quarterly newsletter to everyone who had given money to the film. We told them about the crew, our progress, and inside "facts" about the production. We even asked the donors to vote on preferences for a title for the film—so that people would feel like part of the project.

SA: When you held screenings, did you ask for responses?

RS: Yeah, although we never opened up our screenings for questions; we always gave out questionnaires instead. We didn't want question-and-answer sessions because they totally skew the response: people who are the mouthiest, but not necessarily the smartest, will sometimes give an off-the-wall response or a very personal response. And then everyone else just responds to that person.

SA: What audience did you have in mind when you were working on the film?

RE: A general audience, always. From the start, I never intended to make a film for gay people only. I wanted to take the story out into the world, as cliched as that sounds. If we would accurately represent people's experiences, then any audience—in Omaha or my parents in New Jersey—would be able to experience those feelings and come to their own conclusions. We didn't want to make a polemical film; we didn't want to make a didactic film. And since part of our funding came from public television, we knew that at the least, it would be shown on public TV.

RS: The film has different messages for different audiences. For gay people, one message is the importance of coming out. As an openly gay man and politician who was able to change society, Harvey Milk was a role model for gay people. And the film conveys a sense of a gay community: that gay people can act together and socialize together. For progressive people, the film shows political gay people, which I think is a fairly new idea. Harvey Milk was an incredible organizer. Also, we wanted to show Harvey's vision of people working together: gay people working with other minorities, with neighborhood people, with unions and other progressive people.

For a general audience, the film clarifies the importance of gay rights. There are also role models: people who are straight, who are friends of gay people, and who support gay rights. And



Three unsuccessful attempts to gain public office didn't discourage Milk, who was elected to San Francisco's Board of Supervisors in 1977.



An exuberant politician, Harvey Milk became a national figure when he became California's first openly gay elected official.

we had another theme: how the media deals with gay issues and political issues. As the movie was being made, that became less a theme than a tool.

SA: Who is you distributor, and did you consider self-distribution?

RS: Rob and I made a decision fairly quickly that we didn't want to set up a distribution company. We knew that we were going to be exhausted by the end of the film, and we knew that if the film was successful, we would want to go to film festivals and live the high life. If it was not successful, then we could take a vacation or work on another movie, or go back to making a living. We knew that we wouldn't have the capital, or the emotional stamina, to distribute the film ourselves. So we started looking for a distributor in May of '84. Because WNET held the premiere rights, we had to ask, "Is this going to be distributed theatrically?" Kathy Kline and David Loxton at WNET were wonderful, tremendously cooperative. We said, "Look, we think the film has a theatrical potential, so we want to make it an hour-and-a-half rather than an hour, and we want to have a theatrical premiere, rather than a PBS premiere." They said, "You're right, it'll work." Then we started to identify who might distribute the film.

Initially, we contacted about 10 different distributors. They didn't want it for different reasons, but mostly because documentaries are difficult to distribute and don't make money. In the end we decided on TC Films International, which is run by Jordan Bock. [*Since this interview was recorded, TC Films no longer has the rights, and the film is being distributed by Cinecom.*]

RE: There was another offer that was competitive with TC Films's. But Jordan was the most enthusiastic person from the get-go. He was extremely aggressive about it, and we thought that was a good sign. He saw a near-fine cut, a funky dub job off a monitor with white leader filling in shots without a final music score, and he already wanted it. Other distributors wanted to wait until we got into the New York Film Festival, until we got reviews from the *New York Times.*

SA: What exactly was your distribution deal?

RS: Theatrical and nontheatrical are the same—50 percent, after costs, goes to the distributor—although that can't be cost-collaterized; that is, if TC loses money on theatrical release, he can't make it up with nontheatrical income. But our video and television percentages are different from theatrical. We get 80 percent.

SA: Where did the film premiere?

RE: At the Telluride Film Festival in Colorado. Telluride was a blast. . . and it was an emotional rollercoaster for us. *Harvey Milk* played not in their main screening room, but in a secondary "community" screening room—a gymnasium really. It was the first night of the festival, we



In 1978, Dan White, the Catholic "family man" and Twinkie-eater, failed to regain his seat on the Board of Supervisors but succeeded in assassinating the city's liberal leadership, Harvey Milk (left) and Mayor George Moscone (right).
Courtesy filmmakers



The night after Milk and Moscone were murdered, supporters and friends mourned and protested in front of City Hall.



Cars were burned on the San Francisco streets as an angry reaction to Dan White's seven-and-a-half year sentence.



Robert Epstein (left) and Richard Schmiechen (right) at the 1985 Academy Award ceremony.
Courtesy AMPAS

were competing with the cocktail party and the main opening film. People were walking out throughout our screening, and we were just sinking lower and lower in our chairs. Of course, I was a wreck, and Richard just shook his head saying, "Well, some people are going to like it and some people aren't." I was devastated. I was ready to get on the plane that night and go home.

We had another screening the next morning. I said to Richard, "I'm going out and have coffee. I can't bear to watch people walk out again." I came back toward the end of the movie, and Richard said, "It's going great. Only three people have left." The lights went up, we got a standing ovation, and there was tremendous audience response. Sheila Benson from the *L.A. Times* was there and talked up the film. For the next three days everyone was just buzzing about it, and the festival programmed a command performance screening the final night, this time in the opera house. We made it uptown! That's when a lot of the critics saw and liked it—Roger Ebert, Jack Mathews of *USA Today,* and a lot of others. The press has been great ever since.

RS: Telluride got word-of-mouth going. It also got us distribution and exhibition deals. Jordan was terrific at the festival because he created a sense of demand for the movie. Suddenly we were having exhibitors knocking on our door trying to get "the Harvey Milk film." Then the film premiered at the New York Film Festival, and we got a lot of New York and national press.

SA: Where was the theatrical opening?

RS: In New York, at the Carnegie Hall Cinema. We did OK there, although we didn't do great. Two weeks at Carnegie Hall. . . I think they were losing money on advertising. Then we moved downtown to the Van Dam, and it has played there ever since—20-some weeks. The audiences began to dwindle, but Jordan kept it there to wait for the Academy Awards. Of course, after we won, the box office really shot up again.

The week after the film opened at the Carnegie, it premiered in San Francisco.

SA: That must have been a special occasion.

RE: It was euphoric. The premiere was at the Castro Theatre, and waves of love poured out from the stage and from the audience, back and forth. The audience lit matches and candles at the end. And there was a thunderous ovation. All the people in the film were there on stage with us, so it was really a joyous night. It felt like we were bringing the film home.

SA: The Academy Awards must have been another high point for you.

RE: It's like this ancient ritual, which even if you've never done it before you know exactly what to do. You link arms, you walk up the red carpet, and you wait for the stars to be introduced. When they're done you enter the Pavilion. Then it gets really nerve-wracking.

RS: I was very anxious, but I felt numb. When Kathleen Turner said the word "The," Debbie Hoffmann [Epstein's co-editor], sitting next to me, screamed, jumped out of her seat two feet, at which point Rob and I jumped up and hugged each other and kissed Debbie. Then we went up and I felt a tremendous sense of power and control. I felt like all my pleasure buttons were being pushed. It was fun, talking to that audience, because Rob and I have been selling this movie for so long, getting up in front of audiences, telling them about the film, and asking them for money.

SA: Did you end up making the film that you wanted to make?

RE: Absolutely. Surprisingly so. The challenge was always how to make a film that's essentially a constructed form of documentary: gathering materials and telling your story principally through its editorial construction rather than through the camera. How do you tell the story so that it has the emotional punch and immediacy and urgency of a verite film? I feel we did do that; I feel that's why the film *is* successful.

RS: With our fine cut, I thought, "This is it, this is exactly what we wanted." I think Rob had more doubts. I'm more gung-ho, go ahead, this is it; I never had any doubts. Our funding was such a torment for this movie, but at every stage along the way I felt that things were coming together: that we had hired the right team to write the narration, and that, miraculously, the right person—Mark Isham, who wrote the music for *Never Cry Wolf* and *Mrs. Soffel*—agreed to do the music. We wanted Harvey Fierstein to do the narration, and he was more than eager. Debbie Hoffmann is a wonderful editor. Everything clicked.

RE: Our intuitions worked. Whenever we were stumped for direction or answers, we could often find it within the material. It was always a challenge as to how we could end the film, with such a devastating culmination: Harvey's been killed; Dan White's trial was a farce; Dan White's out of prison after five years; the gay community's burning police cars. How could you end the film on a note of non-devastation, or, more importantly, of hope? Ultimately, we were able to get that from Harvey himself.

Susan Adams is a writer living in New York City.

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The Festival of Festivals press conference: (left to right) director Jonathan Demme with Talking Heads Chris Frantz, Tina Weymouth, and David Byrne.
Photo Robert Aaronson

FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS: MIXING BUSINESS AND PLEASURE

On my way to the press office at the Park Plaza Hotel during the Toronto Festival of Festivals last fall, I passed a florist shop which had a window display featuring a glittering two-foot long *papier mache* hypodermic needle resting on a white miniature bed surrounded by an elaborate arrangement of wreaths and bouquets. After wondering for a week about the perverse aesthetic behind this, I finally walked into the shop and asked about it. The explanation is indicative of how this nine-year-old festival, which screened 400 films from 26 countries in a week, operates. There is no official competition for films entered in the Festival of Festivals (although the public can vote as often as it likes for a "most popular" prize), but there is a competition for the best store window display with a festival theme. First prize for best window is a "Gold Pass" (not to be confused with a "I Want It All Pass," or a "Gala Pass," or a "Daytime Pass"). The store window, it turned out, was based on a Dutch film called *White Madness,* in which the hero, an addict, injects his mother with a lethal heroin dose in a "mercy killing."

Last year, the festival drew about 180,000 filmgoers to six different theaters (within walking distance of each other) in a town that has a reputation for being big on movies. In addition to the films, the festival features a trade forum; last year's topic was co-productions. The Toronto papers—the *Star,* the *Globe and Mail,* and the *Sun*—do big spreads on the festival, including reviews and pullouts with a fair share of attention going to "gala premieres" and the "star tribute" (Warren Beatty in 1984) by critics Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert. The galas included *All of Me, Carmen, Places in the Heart, A Soldier's Story,* and about eight others. *Variety* covered the festival in three different issues. The press list is 10 pages long, and the guest list of filmmakers, distributors, and trade forum speakers is 20. With 400 films screened in nine days, a queasy feeling of film glut develops, although director S. Wayne Clarkson has said that the fest will be scaling back in the future. Last year, the overkill was due in part to a 100-plus Canadian picture retrospective.

U.S. independent films were found in the "Contemporary World Cinema" section (*Stranger Than Paradise,* Jim Jarmusch; *Old Enough,* Marisa Silver; *Blood Simple,* Joel Coen; *Choose Me,* Alan Rudolf; *Bless Their Little Hearts,* Billy Woodberry; *Wildrose,* John Hanson; *Hotel New York,* Jackie Raynal; *A Flash of Green,* Victor Nunez) and in the "Stranger Than Fiction: World Documentary" section (*Style Wars,* Tony Silver; *Hell's Kitchen Chronicle,* Maren and Reed Erskine; *Burroughs,* Howard Brookner; *The Good Fight,* Noel Buckner, Mary Dore, Sam Sills; *The Gospel According to Al Green,* Robert Mugge; *The Secret Agent,* Jackie Ochs; *Notes from Under the Volcano,* Gary Conklin; *In Heaven There Is No Beer?* and *Sprout Wings and Fly,* Les Blank; *Before Stonewall,* Greta Schiller, Robert Rosenberg, John Scagliotti).

The festival has a staff of 100 and operates year-round. Each section has its own programming committee with Clarkson, Paris resident David Overbey, and Kay Armatage as the permanent programmers. Jim Monro was responsible for selecting the work in the documentary section in 1984. Managing director Anne Mackenzie and director of communications Helga Stephenson are also active in the selecting and scheduling processes. Each member of this group has their own tastes and areas of expertise. Clarkson, wiry and businesslike, brings in the heavy hitters from Hollywood. Over the years, studios have allowed the festival to screen major premieres. Clarkson's taste is the most conservative of the lot. Overbey brings in the European art films. Armatage's area is avant-garde, feminist, and independent cinema. According to Cinecom's Ira Deutchman, it was she who pushed for *Stop Making Sense* and got it—in exchange for a gala slot and press conference for Jonathan Demme and Talking Heads.

Personal contacts and track records go a long way in the selection process for any festival. Toronto had previously showed John Hanson's *Northern Lights* and, as they are interested in second films, programmed Hanson's *Wildrose* last year. Clarkson was responsible for programming the independently produced *Old Enough,* which was submitted through Orion Classics who, according to director Marisa Silver, thought Toronto was "important for building up word of mouth and getting reviews." Billy Woodberry's *Bless Their Little Hearts* was, one programmer said, on "everybody's list"; the festival has a long association with its writer, Charles Burnett, having screened his features *Killer of Sheep* and *My Brother's Wedding.* The Coen Brothers' *Blood Simple* and Paul Morrissey's *Mixed Blood* appealed to a "shared taste for sleazy kinds of exploitation film that are also intelligent."

The event has a decidedly commercial bent. Many of the films screened are on a festival circuit (thus the name "Festival of Festivals"), some coming from Cannes and others heading for New York. Still others are on the theatrical and/or TV sales track. Entertainment value has a high priority in selection considerations, but the programmers do include many films that would never be otherwise seen in Canada. But independents may be disappointed: films can easily get lost in the shuffle, press conferences are reserved for the big films, and smaller pics get short shrift schedule-wise. For instance, *The Times of Harvey Milk* attracted considerably more attention at the smaller Telluride and the more exclusive New York Film Festival. But the

festival organizers are fond of citing the success at Toronto of such films as *The Fourth Man, Best Boy,* and *Diva,* which was not popular in France until it became a hit in North America.

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The festival's accompanying Trade Forum runs three days; registration costs about $100 per day. This year, the topic will be "Marketing and Promotion for TV and Film." Last year's topic was "Producing Partners." The forum consisted of 11 panel discussions, with topics ranging from "The Essentials of a Co-Production" to a technology sidebar on special effects and video hardware. There was a definite Canadian focus to the event: most of the audience consisted of Canadian producers, and their questions reflected Canadian needs and concerns. But the information imparted by the "American Small Screen Partners" panel (Harry Chandler, Showtime/The Movie Channel; Jim Jimirro, The Disney Channel; David Meister, HBO; and Bernard Weitzman, Lorimar TV) regarding made-for-TV movies in the two to six million dollar range was relevant to producers on both sides of the border.

Showtime, Chandler said, has "fairly specific requirements for what will work." He explained that they look for "highly visible promotable programming," which translates into big stars for the lead roles. They are interested in co-productions for mini-series, made-for-TV movies, and series. Jimirro claimed Disney was making a "massive commitment to new productions," with four out of 10 hours devoted to original programming. Disney is a family service, but interestingly, they are not particularly interested in children's programming: Jimirro stressed that Disney is "not a kids' channel." They intend to "maintain a strong children's block" (using the Disney library), but "concentrate time and dollars on feature films in the prime-time slot." They are very interested in co-productions since they don't have full production facilities, and their investment often takes the form of an ancillary rights purchase. HBO, according to Meister, is looking for made-for-TV movies of "good quality" for the "older moviegoing public in the 35–49-year-old range." HBO will guarantee an investment in return for creative control of the program.

Lorimar's Weitzman quoted the sobering "fact" that 20 ideas out of 4,000 make it to network broadcast and claimed that the same was true for pay cable. His company acts as a middleman, producing and repping productions to TV outlets. In exchange for total rights, Weitzman said that Lorimar can get a better deal than independents can on their own. The financial stability of any company that invests as co-producers, according to Weitzman, depends on keeping ancillary rights.

The best way to approach these companies is to submit a two- or three-page synopsis of a treatment. Says Chandler, "The more advanced the stage of production is, the easier it is to evaluate; the less advanced, the easier it is to manipulate."



Irving Kahn informs Castle Hill participants on the latest fiber optics technology.
Photo: Jim Somers

Independent co-productions with European TV was addressed in the "Partner's Worldwide" seminar. The panel included Jean-Luc Defait, UGC (France); Jean-Noble Dibie, SFP TV (France); Conlin Leventhal, the Fourth Channel (Great Britain); Walter Konrad, ZDF TV (West Germany); Steve Walsh, Goldcrest Films (Great Britain); Andrea Piazzesi, SACIS (Italy). Their approach to co-productions varied; each presented particular risks and rewards.

UGC is among the most commercial. Defait said that they wanted "commercial subjects—not art films. We are looking to make a profit." In the case of UGC and SFP, co-production can mean sharing artistic control. Dibie said that "each partner contributes financially, artistically, and technically," while Defait said that partners could either "look together for scriptwriters, directors, and actors," or UGC could develop "purely financial partnerships." One hard and fast rule of SFP is that all of their money has to be spent in France.

ZDF differentiates itself, as does Channel 4, in being noncommercial. Leventhal noted that Channel 4's mandate is to "offer a distinctive service; we're encouraged to experiment." They buy a large portion of their programming from independent producers, although "finances are limited," and what they will spend per production is relatively low. Their investment in *Paris, Texas* and *In the White City,* independent films of some artistic integrity, was limited to approximately $100,000 each. Their main interest is feature-length films and mini-series.

Goldcrest, a private company, is concerned with whether a program is going to "please a worldwide audience." Steve Walsh said their investments are "dictated by pure commercial considerations." According to *Variety,* Goldcrest, which has a long-established relationship with HBO and PBS, may be on the verge of producing for one of the U.S. commercial networks.

Italy is unique because of its low power TV system. Rome alone has 50 TV stations. Most of the bigger networks acquire American TV programming, but RAI, of which Piazzesi's SACIS is a wholly-owned subsidiary, tries to produce or co-produce 50 percent of its programming. SACIS's role is to find production partners for RAI, finance the productions, give guarantees, and perhaps most importantly, invest in foreign projects "if there is reciprocity." Piazzesi noted that "real co-production involves shooting in Italy." Or, as ZDF's Walter Konrad said, "In international co-production each partner tries to put forth their national interest and get the other guy's money." —*Robert Aaronson*

The festival will screen non-Canadian features and documentaries through early July on videocassette in Toronto. Label tape: Festival of Festivals, 69 Yorkville Ave., Suite 205, M5R 1B8; tel. (416) 967-7371; Do Not X-Ray. Send via courier service such as Federal Express or DHL, or First Class post. Attach pro forma invoice for Customs with title, running time, dub of 16 or 35mm, return address and phone number. Send entry form (avail. at AIVF) with tape and send promotional material separately. Phone or telex Barbara Mainguy with airway bill number. Telex: 06-219724. If it is not possible to send a tape to Toronto, programmers will be in New York to screen work at the National Film Board of Canada office from July 8–12.

CASTLE HILL: PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

By late Sunday afternoon you could tell which participants had attended the full three days of the first annual Film/Video International at Castle Hill: those with the preoccupied air that comes from ingesting large doses of advice and ideas, bleary eyes from staring at screens and monitors, and furred tongues from talking through dozens of introductory conversations with other conferees. But all this seemed to indicate that the event had been a success.

Part conference, part festival, Film/Video International was held last August at an opulent 165-acre seaside estate called Castle Hill in Ipswich, Massachusetts. Over 300 people participated in the event, co-sponsored by the Castle Hill Foundation as part of its annual festival of performing arts, and the Franklin Picture Company, a telecommunications company based in Boston and Philadelphia. Dan Leahy, president of Franklin Picture, originated the idea for the conference, and one of his first moves was appointing as conference chair Charlotte Schiff-Jones, a former vice president at CBS Cable and Time, Inc., who now runs her own media marketing company in New York City.

In designing the conference, Leahy saw a need for a yearly "meeting of the minds," a sort of enlightened interchange between media professionals in all disciplines from throughout the

world. The summer camp atmosphere at Castle Hill allowed people to relax, participate in open dialogues on current problems, trends, opportunities, and new ideas, and generally to avoid the "hawking and peddling" that goes on at most film festivals.

The conference addressed the question of how quality work can be achieved in what is essentially a commercial industry. The panelists—producers, financiers, distributors, professors, videographers, independent filmmakers, network programmers, composers—had, in Schiff-Jones's words, "demonstrated a capacity to succeed, and with quality." But "quality" appeared to be a somewhat premature problem for many of the independents present, since without financial support they can't do *any* work, let alone quality work. Still, it was encouraging to be reminded that most of the people in the field are deeply concerned about quality and the negative effect that the marketplace often has on artistic endeavor.

Each day's events were structured around panel discussions interspersed with free time to meet other panelists and attendees. Since the conference was open to the public, it was a tremendous opportunity for people on the "outside" to meet people on the "inside." For instance, you could find a teacher who uses video in her kindergarten class chatting about the effects of music on children with Joe Raposo, musical director of *Sesame Street.*

The first day, the conference concentrated on the business of film/video, with panel discussions on how to finance and distribute projects. The second day was devoted to "artists and their art, craftsmen and their craft," and covered such topics as transferring live theater to film and animation and computer graphics. The final day addressed new technology, future arts, and "image intrusion," concluding with a debate called, "Can there be intelligence in media?" Screenings included *The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez,* accompanied by its producer Moctesuma Esparza, Alexandre Rockwell's *Hero,* Fred Wiseman's *Seraphita's Diary,* and two shorts by Andy Anderson. But the screenings never assumed the importance the planners envisioned, due in part to scheduling logistics and problems with the 16mm projector.

—John Kitchener

The 1985 edition of Film/Video International is once again being organized by Dan Leahy and the Franklin Picture Co. In addition to the conference at the Castle Hill estate, Aug. 15–17, chaired again by Charlotte Schiff-Jones, a weeklong film and video festival is being planned for Aug. 11–18 in Boston. Fifty films and 30 hours of TV, including world premieres, international festival selections and features, shorts, and video will be shown in association with the Boston Film/Video Foundation, the Institute for Contemporary Arts, and the Museum of Fine Arts. Deac Roselle, film curator at the museum, is programming the event. For more information regarding registration for the conference or for entering the festival, contact: Film/Video International, Box 880, Back Bay Annex, Boston, MA 02117; (617) 262-6325.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson and Felix Rebolledo. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement,** and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

● *ASIAN AMERICAN VIDEO FESTIVAL,* New York, December. This is the 4th non-competitive annual showcase sponsored by Asian CineVision exclusively for Asian or Asian American videographers. Last year, videos by Nam June Paik, Sandra Gim Yep, Tom Nakashima, Spencer Nakasako, Frederic Mao, Art Nomura, Asian Women United, Arturo Cubacub, Nori Sato, Tomoga Sasaki, Rii Kanzaki, Ye Suk Rhee was featured along with installations by Chan S. Chung & Taka Iimura, and invited works by Shigeko Kubota & Nancy Tong. Work must originate from video. Selected works will go on tour, possibly to W. Germany, Chicago & L.A., for which a rental will be paid. No entry fee; festival provides return shipping. Formats: ¾" tapes; all subjects & genres. Deadline: Sept. 30. Contact: Festival Director, Asian CineVision, 32 E. Broadway, NY, NY 10002; (212) 925-8685.

● *CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* Nov. 8–24. Over 200 prizes were awarded last year; fest features 2000 entries. *Variety* covers the event extensively & has rated it as one of the top domestic festivals. Categories include feature, animation, educational, documentary, video, network TV production, local TV production, short subject, TV commercial, student, & poster. If you think you have a winner, it may make sense to enter in spite of the relatively high entry fees ($35–75). Entries accepted in 35mm, 16mm, & ¾" for video competition. Deadline: Sept. 20. Contact: Michael Kutza, Director, CIFF, 415 Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 644-3400.

● *ATHENS VIDEO FESTIVAL,* Ohio, Nov. 7–9. This year, for the 1st time, this video event will be held independently of the Athens Film Festival. The Athens Center for Film and Video received over 350 tapes last year for competition in 17 categories, & marketing director Stephen Magowan expects an increase in 1985. A selection committee eliminates 20–30% of submissions; the remaining group is screened publicly and judged in an open competition. Guest videomakers, retrospectives & workshops make this event far more than a screening series. Since media arts are very popular at Ohio University, there is an appreciative student audience. Last year's judges included Laurie Zippay from Electronic Arts Intermix in New York & Neil Seiling from University Community Video in Minneapolis; guests included videomakers Skip Blumberg & Cecelia Condit, & Steina Vasulka did an installation. Cash prizes for each category, which include video art, music video, documentary, educational, computer graphics, short story, animation. Running times: up to 2 hrs. Formats ¾", VHS & Beta; single channel works only. Entry fees based on running time: $25–$65. Deadline: Sept. 2. Contact: Athens Center for Film & Video, Box 388, Athens, OH 45701; (614) 594-6888.

● *CINE,* the Council on International Non-Theatrical Events. Biannual competition awards Golden Eagles to "professional" films & CINE Eagles to "amateur" films. Winners are then entered in foreign festivals at the maker's expense. Final judgments made on basis of which films most "suitably" represent U.S. video/filmmakers; works which are controversial, or politically or aesthetically radical, are less likely to be selected. Entries in 16 or 35mm and ¾". Entry fees $55–$110, depending on length. Deadlines: Aug. 1 & Feb. 1. Contact: S.R. Tamhane, Exec. Director, CINE, 1201 16th St. NW, Rm 105, Washington, DC 20086; (202) 785-1136.

● *COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* Ohio, Nov. 1–2. Now in its 33rd year, this is a well-established, well-run event. Hefty entry fees ($65–$210) guarantee each filmmaker at least an honorable mention & a plaque, but the abundance of these non-competitive mentions (about 400 were given out last year) makes them meaningless. 9 categories: art & culture, business & industry, education, health & medicine, religion & ethics, social studies, travel (U.S. & foreign, videotapes & promotional materials for films). 16mm films & TV spot announcements, ¾" videotapes & promotional materials for films eligible. Stringent shipment regulations; all entries returned UPS collect. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Daniel Prugh, Film Council of Greater Columbus, 1229 W. 3rd Ave., Columbus, OH 43212; (614) 291-2149.

● *DORE SCHARY AWARD,* New York, Dec. 1. This student competition is organized by Focus, the same people who bring us the Nissan student film awards, & sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Open to narrative, documentary & animated film & video productions on "human relations." Suggested topics include ethnic & minority portraits, prejudice & discrimination, inter-religious understanding, cultural pluralism. 1st prize in film & video: $1,000; 2nd prizes: $500. Must be completed during the 1984–85 academic year. Deadline: July 31. Winners announced Sept. 20. 1st prize winners flown to New York for Dec. ceremony. Entry form must be accompanied by faculty sponsor letter of recommendation. Formats: ¾", 16mm. Contact: Dore Schary Awards, Television, Radio, Film Dept., Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 823 United Nations Plaza, NY NY 10017; (212) 490-2525

● *FILM ARTS FESTIVAL,* San Francisco, Oct. 18–20. Formerly known as the Bay Area Filmmaker's Showcase & jointly sponsored by the Film Arts Foundation & San Francisco's Film Festival, event was cancelled last yr. due to a falling out between the organizations. BAFS has been incorporated into the San Francisco Film Fest, & the Film Arts Foundation has decided to put on its own non-competitive showcase exclusively for Bay Area video/filmmakers. This "Celebration of Bay Area Independent Video and Film" will present premieres juxtaposed with films from the past to give a sense of film history & continuity. Festival will program in thematic clusters. Any subject, any length in 16mm, 35mm, & ¾" video. No fees. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Bob Hawk, Film Arts Festival, 346 Ninth St., 2nd floor, San Francisco, CA 94103; call (415) 552-8760 & leave message, Bob Hawk will return the call within 24 hrs.



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● *GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* Milwaukee, Oct. 11-12. Open to filmmakers & videographers from IL, IN, MI, MN, OH & WI. with independently made, non-commercial films or videotapes produced after Dec. 31, 1982. $1200 in prizes. Categories: narrative, animation, documentary, experimental. Formats: 16mm & ¾". Fee: $15 per entry (includes insured return of work). Deadline: Aug. 10. Contact: Pat Tully, G.L.F.V., PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201; (414) 963-7714.

● *THE INDEPENDENT FEATURE PROJECT,* New York, Oct. 9-19. 7th annual marketplace for independent feature films (over 75 mins.), plus video sidebar for short films, videos, works-in-progress & promo clips for films seeking additional funding. International festival directors & foreign & domestic buyers & distributors plan to attend. Last year's market was covered by the *New York Times* and *Variety.* Registrants for the '84 market included Cinecom, Britain's Channel 4, Filmex, the Rotterdam Film Festival, & 70 others. Films screened included *Blood Simple, Before Stonewall, Screamplay, Far From Poland, Times of Harvey Milk, Streetwise, Wildrose, Solomon Northrup's Odyssey* & 50 others. Video sidebar included *Everglades City, Silent Pioneers, Ornette: Made in America* & 40 others, many of which have since been completed. Market has been highly instrumental in creating an international identity for independent features. The catalogue is a useful annual guide to indepndent features & includes contact information. Attendance fluctuates for screenings, so unless your film has acquired a "buzz" you will only get out of this event what you put into it. Registrants may be keeping low profiles at screenings, but can be ferreted out & buttonholed. There are mailboxes for publicity material, areas for postering & parties for schmoozing. Open to all styles & genres except exploitation films. Entry fees included in IFP membership & are tax-deductible. Contact: Shelby Stone (new market coordinator) or Elizabeth Wetzel (new executive director), IFP, 21 W. 86th St., NY NY 10024; (212) 496-0909.

● *INTERNATIONAL FILM AND TV FESTIVAL OF NEW YORK,* Nov. 8-15. Notoriously known as a pay-through-the-nose-for-a-snatch-of-the-big-time festival, it has been denigrated over the years in this column for its policy of giving out specious official plaques to all entries regardless of quality of the work. Nevertheless, nearly 5000 entries were received last year in various categories of industrial & educational film & video, TV programming & advertising, lead-in titles & trailers, & other AV productions. Basic entry fee is $85, but may be as high as $150. Formats: ¾" video & 16mm; commercials in 35mm are also accepted. Deadline: Sept. 9. Contact: Michael Gallagher, 251 W. 57th St., NY, NY 10019; (914) 238-4481.

● *NEW YORK GAY FILM FESTIVAL,* December. 8th yr. for this non-competitive fest, which has been growing in leaps & bounds. Event is publicized in *Village Voice* & other publications, which usually guarantees enthusiastic audiences. Formats: 16mm, ¾", ½" (VHS or Beta). Deadline: July 30. No fee. Contact: Peter Lowry, Altermedia, PO Box 948, Bowling Green Station, NY, NY 10274; (718) 273-8829.

● *SAN FRANCISCO VIDEO FESTIVAL,* Sept. 26-Oct. 5. Open competition for industrial & commercial ¾" tapes; by invitation only for artistic work. Last year, Les Levine, Steven Agetstein & Tom Shermann judged. Fee: $40, which includes return shipping to invited or accepted entries. Deadline: July 31. Contact: Steven Agetstein,

SFVF, 650 Missouri, San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 863-8434.

● *VISIONS OF U.S. VIDEO CONTEST,* Hollywood, August. Entries invited in Beta, VHS or 8mm video. Categories: fiction, nonfiction, experimental, music video. Judges include: Francis Coppola, David Byrne, Shelley Duvall, Gene Shalit, Tom Shales, Debbie Allen, Kenny Loggins & Christian Souza. Prizes include latest Sony equipment (Betamovie, Beta Hi-Fi, XBR TV) & internships at The Movie Channel. Sponsored by Sony & The Movie Channel & administered by The American Film Institute. Deadline: August 15. Contact: Video Contest, Box 200, Hollywood, CA 90078; (213) 856-7743.

● *WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FILM FESTIVAL,* California, Sept. 23–24. Open to noncommercial filmmakers. Formats: 16mm, VHS, & fixed-sync slide/tape programs no longer than 20 min. Multiple entries permitted, but each must be accompanied by separate entry form. Works will be returned by fest through the mail. Fee: $10/entry. Deadline: Aug. 30. Contact: Elizabeth Stowe, 1985 Water Pollution Control Film Festival, Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant, 2501 Embarcadero Way, Palo Alto, CA 94303; (415) 329-2598.

FOREIGN

● *ART ROCK '85—THIRD INT'L FESTIVAL OF VIDEO CLIPS,* France, Oct. 26–Nov. 3. This festival tries to help young producers get exposure, so they "generally do not present great productions (such as Michael Jackson) who don't need us to be famous..." Programs include concerts, film screenings, exhibitions, & video clip festival itself which is presented to a jury of journalists, producers, musicians, along with the public. They are interested in presenting work by U.S. independents, & suggest producers send info regarding their work. By the look of its 2 catalogues, the festival has expanded considerably over 2 yrs. Categories include music video & video art. Contact: Marie Lostys, Association Wild Rose, 33 BD. Clemenceau, 22000 Saint-Brieuc, France; tel. (96) 33 52 02.

● *BILBAO INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DOCUMENTARIES & SHORT FILMS,* Spain. December. Documentaries of any length, & other films with running times under 60 min. are invited for this 26th event. 10 cash prizes. Richard Pena, film programmer for the Chicago Art Institute, was one of the judges in '84. Categories: documentary, animation, narrative, experimental. Formats: 16 & 35mm; ¾" OK for selection. No fee. Contact: Colon de Larreategui 37–4 Dcha, Bilbao, 9 Spain; tel. 424-86-98/416-54-29; telex: 31013 TRAC-E.

● *CINANIMA INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL,* Portugal, November. 9th yr. for this small animation competition. Categories include films of less than 3 mins., from 3–12 mins., 12–40 mins. Last year the judges included Charles Samu of HBO. Formats: 16 & 35mm, completed within 2 yrs. No fee. Contact: Organization Committee, Cinanima, Apartado 43, 4501 Espanho Codes, Portugal; tel. 721 621.

● *FESTIVAL DEI POPOLI,* Florence, December. 26th annual competition seeks documentaries "dealing with sociological, political, economic, anthropological, folkloristic & ethnographic themes." 60 films were screened in '84, in competition. The winning film was Ken Loach's *Whose Side Are You On?* Maren & Reed Erskine's *Hell's*

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

AIVF is pleased to announce a discount program of film and video production services for its members. The companies listed below will offer discounts to AIVF members upon presentation of a membership card. We hope that this program will foster closer cooperation between independent producers and companies that provide production services.

Tenth Street Production Group
Alan Schaaf, President
147 Tenth St.
San Francisco, CA (415) 621-3395

10% discount on all lighting and grip rentals and on all location scouting/production manager services. Negotiable rates on all other production personnel/services and equipment. Free telephone consultations re: local permits/fees and other shooting requirements/possibilities.

TVC Labs
Dennis P. Hartigan, Executive VP, Sales & Marketing
311 West 43 St.
New York (212) 397-8600

10% minimum discount on all services; additional discounts negotiable.

Camera Mart
Leo Rosenberg, Rental Manager
456 West 55 St.
New York (212) 757-6977

20% discount on all rentals of film and video equipment with some specific exceptions. Larger discounts may be available for rentals of long duration or for favorable payment terms.

Rafik
814 Broadway
New York (212) 475-9110

25% discount on straight rental of screening room, rentals on cameras and sales of used videocassettes. 15% discount on use of editing facilities. All other supplies at discount rates; special deals available.

Rough Cut Video Services
Mark Fischer
129 West 22 St.
New York (212) 242-1914

10% across-the-board discount on all services, including ¾" productions, ¾" editing and VHS to ¾" transfers.

Square 12 Video Post-Production
Bob Wiegand
16 Greene St.
New York (212) 925-6059

10 % discount.

Indieflex
Randal Alan Goya
949 Amsterdam Ave., 4N
New York (212) 678-7989

10% discount on high-quality FX and foleys.

National Video Industries, Inc.
Louise Diamond, Operations Manager
15 West 17th Street
New York, (212) 691-1300

Negotiable discounts on studio production facilities, remote production packages, postproduction and screening facilities, transfer and duplication. Package deals available.

Fine Line Productions
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3181 A Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94110, (415) 821-9946

15% discount on ¾" equipment and editing facility rentals. Preproduction consultation services, screening facility, and ¾" to VHS dubbing also available.

AIVF would like thank these companies for participating. Other firms wishing to be included should contact: Andrea Estepa, Membership Coordinator, (212) 473-3400.

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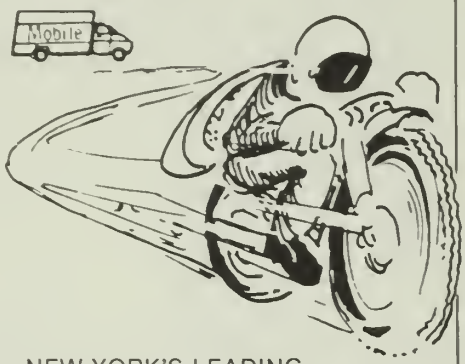
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Kitchen Chronicle garnered honorable mention. According to *Variety*, "The trouble was the impossibility of being in 4 or 5 places at the same time, & that parts of the day were left empty while others were overcrowded. Projection facilities were poor, main event sites were far apart & uncomforable, & organization at best lackadaisical." Crowds are substantial & the jury represents a cross section of informed, serious documentary experts from around the world. Formats: 16 & 35mm, ¾" for TV productions only. Deadline: Oct. Contact: Festival Dei Popoli, Via Fiumi, 50123 Florence, Italy; tel. (055) 294 353.

● *FLANDERS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* Ghent, Oct. 4–15. The feature competition resumes in '85 after going biannual in '83. 4 $1,000 prizes given. Last year's sections included gala premieres, the main festival of independent films, & midnight specials. After France & Belgium, the U.S. had the largest number of submissions, with many heading or looking for theatrical release. 8,000 attended the 109 features which included festival standards of 1984, *Bless Their Little Hearts, Chan Is Missing, Hotel New York, In Heaven There Is No Beer?, Stranger Than Paradise,* and *Old Enough.* Theme for the competition this year is "the impact of music on films." Formats: 16 & 35mm. deadline: forms, Aug. 15; films, Sept. 15. Contact: International Film Festival of Flanders-Ghent, Kortyksesteenweg 1104, B-9820 Ghent, Belgium; tel. 91 25 25 12; telex: 12750 Daska. Apps. avail. at AIVF (send SASE).

● *HUESCA INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL,* Spain, Oct. Competitive event to promote short films in Spain. 3 sections: int'l competition, retrospective, information. Max. running time: 30 min. All categories except tourism & publicity. Subtitled films preferred. Films which have won awards at other competitions not eligible. Prizes include best fiction, best animation, best documentary. Deadline: Sept. Contact: Certamen Internacional de Films Cortos, Ciudad de Huesca, Baltasar Grecian 6, Huesca, Spain; tel. (974) 227058; telex: 58364 BBHS-E.

● *INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS AGAINST RACISM,* Amiens, November. This is the sister festival to the FESPACO event is Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. It is dedicated to independent world cinema. U.S. participation has included *Clarence and Angel,* by Robert Gardner, Billy Woodberry's *Bless Their Little Hearts,* & Chris Choy's *Mississippi Triangle.* Competittion for features & short films. No fee. Contact: Jean Pierre Garcia, Festival Int'l du Films Contre le Racisme et pour L'Amitie entre les People Siege Social, 36 rue de Noyon, 8000 Amiens, France; tel. (22) 91 01 44.

● *INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW SUPER 8 CINEMA,* Caracas, Aug. 5–14. Now in its 10th year, this festival attracts the best of artistic, professonal S-8 productions worldwide. Screenings, workshops, & competition create an atmosphere of dedication & community. Director Carlos Castillio is a renowned promoter of this format. Any filmmaker who can attend will not be disappointed by this international gathering of S-8 luminaries. Fees: $20 covers return shipping. 3 cash prizes. In former years AIVF member Toni Treadway has been a contact for the festival; her address is 63 Domick St., Somerville, MA 02143; tel: (617) 666-3372; or contact Carlos Castillo, Calle Passo Real, Quinto Linda, Orados del Estes, Caracas Venezuela, tel. (582) 771-367.

● *LEIPZIG INT'L FESTIVAL,* E. Germany, November. A well established (27 yrs.) enclave for progressive documentaries, this competition showed 200 works from 50 countries last year. The big winner was *The Good Fight,* which garnered the Golden Dove cash prize & an additional jury prize. The motto of the fest is "Films of the World for Peace of the World." Films on disarmament, 3rd World struggles, socialist history most popular. Films must have been completed since June 1, '84 & not have won awards at other international festivals. Formats: 16 & 35mm, ¾" OK for selection. Deadline: now until Oct. Contact in the U.S. is Jonathan Miller, Icarus Films, 200 Park Ave. S., #1319, NY, NY 1003, (212) 674-3375. Fest. address: Komitee Internationale Leipziger Dokumentar und Kurzfilmwochen fur Kino und Fernscehn, DDR 1055 Berlin, Chodowieckistrasse 32, GDR.

● *LONDON FILM FESTIVAL,* England, Nov. 14–Dec. 1. Approximately 200 features are screened at this long-standing (29 yrs.) non-competitive event. Most of the selections are made at other festivals (Berlin, Cannes), but unsolicited entries are welcome. Festival is sponsored by the British Film Institute. Shorts under 65 min. by invitation only, although fest will consider written queries. All films must be British premieres. Almost 35 titles came from the U.S. last year, with Hollywood & revivals counting for a good number, but independent productions such as *City Limits, Committed, Enormous Changes at the Last Minute & The Good Fight* premiered here. Deadline: now–Aug. 15. Formats: 16 & 35mm; for viewing purposes, send U-matic (¾") or VHS (not NTSC) cassettes. Address entries as follows: "London Film Festival, National Film Theater, South Bank, London SE1 8XT, England. Air freight address: LFF/Nat. Film Archive c/o FTS Ltd., Heathrow airport, London, for exhibition: ref. IRG/789/74." Contact: Programming, Derek Malcolm; information: Helen Loveridge, Programme Planning Office; tel. 01-437-4355; telex: 27624.

● *MANNHEIM INT'L FILM FESTIVAL,* W. Germany, Oct. 7–12 . The directors of this long-established documentary & 1st feature competition, Fee Vaillant and Hanns Maier, will be screening films for inclusion in the 34th annual event at AIVF at the end of July. Cash prizes total over 25,000 DM. Last year's U.S. participants included Five Point Films's *Blue Heaven;* Nina Menkes's *The Great Sadness of Zohara;* Jeffrey Skoller's *Topography/Surface Writing;* & Robert Mackover's *The Great Weirton Steal.* Categories: documentaries on any subject, of any length, in 16 or 35mm completed within the last year and unreleased in Germany, & 1st features of any style, genre or subject with running times of at least 60 mins. The festival emphasizes politically progressive works & some experimental films; all entries, though, are encouraged for pre-selection in New York. Application forms available at AIVF (send SASE). ¾" cassettes OK for selection purposes. Fest pays RT shipping to Europe. Fees for submitting entries to cover shipping & handling within the U.S.: ¾" cassette (1): $5; ¾" cassette (2): $10; 16mm film up to 30 mins., $10; up to 60 mins., $15; up to 90 mins., $20; over 90 mins., $25; call for info re 35mm films. Deadline: July 15.

● *RIO INT'L FESTIVAL OF FILM, TV & VIDEO,* Brazil, November. Last year, the first event drew huge crowds for a mostly Latin selection of features, shorts & video in competition. Only Paul Morrissey's *Mixed Blood* was there from the U.S., although the festival literature noted a retrospective of American independents. New York's Public Theater programmer Fabiano Canosa repped the fest in the U.S., & critics Annette Insdorf, William Wolf & the Museum of

Modern Art's Adriene Mancia attended. Judges included Dominique Sanda, Ousmani Sembene & Dennis Hopper. Event also featured a market with 75 buyers. Contact: Festival Internacional de Cinema, Televisio e Video, Direcao Geral, Hotel Nacional, Ave. Niemeyer 769, Sao Conrado, Brazil CEP 22450; tel. (021) 322 1000, 322 2860, 322 2855; telex: HORS BR 021 23615.

● *SALERNO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL,* Italy, October. Now in its 38th year, this competitive festival highlights features, documentaries, scientific, medical, educational, sponsored & animated films & videotapes. Last year, New York filmmaker Andre Degas had a helluva time getting back his print of *American Autobahn;* after months of calls & letters it came back with hundreds of dollars of customs charges due. Beware. Deadline: mid-Sept. Fees: 6,000–50,000 lire. Formats: 16, 35 ¾" & S-8. Contact: La Segretaria, Festival Internazionale del Cinema, Casella Postale 137, Salerno 84100, Italy; tel. (089) 231 953.

● *TOKYO VIDEO FESTIVAL,* Japan, November. A major video-only event (see *the Independent,* July–Aug., 1984). Last year, 1,330 works were submitted. This year a new division on the theme of "youth" has been established to commemorate the United Nations International Youth Year. 42 award winners are selected with top honorees invited to attend the ceremony in Japan. Prizes include money, trophies, & equipment. No fee. All formats & categories welcome. Deadline: now-Sept 10. Contact: Terry Kikuchi, JVC, 41 Slater Dr. Elmwood Pk., NJ 07407; tel. (201) 794-3900; or Masami Fukumoto, TVC General Manager, VIC Center, Victor Co. of Japan Ltd., for applications.

● *TYNESIDE FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* England, Oct. 11–20. More information has arrived since last issue. The 1984 winner of the 5,000-pound Tyne award for the best feature was Marianne Rosenbaum's *Peppermint Freedom* (W. Germany), starring Peter Fonda. Other awards include 1,000 pounds for best short film and a 250-pound award for best video. Wide range of styles included *Stranger Than Paradise* by Jim Jarmusch, *Hotel New York* by Jackie Raynal, Gary MacDonald's *Rape/Crisis,* Diego Echeverria's *Los Sures,* Stephen Ning's *Freckled Rice,* Maren and Reed Erskine's *Hell's Kitchen Chronicle,* and Dina & Marisa Silver's *Old Enough.* A "spotlight on the post-holocaust Jewish experience" featured Jack Fisher's *A Generation Apart* & Steve Brand's *Kaddish.* Deadline: July 15. Formats: S-8, 16 & 35mm, ¾" & VHS. No fee. The festival's new director is Fred Brooks; programmer, Maggi Hunt. contact: Tyneside Cinema, 10 Pilgrim St., Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 6qG, England; tel. (2632) 321507, 325592. Applications avail. at AIVF (send SASE).

● *WORLD FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILMS,* Belgium, Oct. 22–26. Sponsored by the Service for Cultural Affairs of the province of Liege & chaired by the Mayor of the town of Huy, 25th yr. of this festival is open for competition to all amateur & independent producers. Amateur films are entered without distinction to format (S-8, 8 & 16mm) in fiction, reality (documentary, tourist films, & "life reports"), & experimental or abstract films. Independent films are entered without regard to category. Gold, silver, bronze & special mention awards given. Max. running time: 30 mins. Competitors receive catalogue & list of winners. Entry fee: $10. Fest pays return postage. Deadline: Sept. 23. Contact: Festival Mondial du Cinema de Courts Metrages, M. Warzee J. Ou M.L. Potelle, Poste Restante, 5200 Huy II, Belgium. Apps. avail. at AIVF (send SASE).



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The collaboration between choreographer Merce Cunningham and cameraman Elliot Caplan resulted in a series of three dance how-to's and a performance tape, "Deli Commedia."
Courtesy videomaker



Cassville, New Jersey's Russian community partying at St. Vladimer's Cemetery in Andrei Jackamets's new video.
Photo: Courtesy videomaker

Film and video are increasingly used in concert with other art forms, as the following recent releases illustrate.

Meredith Wheeler's Lindsey Enterprises of New York has produced **Eulogy**, a TV adaptation of a short play by James G. Richardson, originally staged by the Ensemble Studio Theatre in New York. Sarah Cunningham and John Randolph portray Katherine and Ben Gracie, an older couple preparing to attend the funeral of Ben's brother and law partner, Sigsby. The video version is directed by Rick Hauser. *Eulogy* was produced "on a shoestring" as a pilot for a series of short plays adapted for television and aimed at cable and home video markets. It received a special judges award for acting at this year's USA Film and Video Festival in Dallas.

Country music and its tradition-rich history are the subjects of **Sunny Side of Life**, a 56-minute documentary on the Carter Family, "the first family of country music," produced by Appalshop Films of Whitesburg, Kentucky. Directors Scott Faulkner, Anthony Slone, and Jack Wright depict the importance of country music in the life and work in the Virginian mountains people. *Sunny Side of Life* was shot on location at the Carter Family Fold, a music and dance hall.

Dance is explored by choreographer Merce Cunningham and cameraman Elliot Caplan in the recently released **Cunningham Dance Technique: Elementary Level (1985)**, an introduction to the basics of the Cunningham technique. The 35-minute color video is the first in a series of three instructional tapes. Cunningham and Caplan are currently collaborating on another dance video, *Deli Commedia.*

Video artists lead the way in exploring political themes with humor and imagination. Ellin Stein and Betsy Newman of New York City report that their videotape, **Debate of the Dead**, has been awarded the Hiroshima Prefecture Governor's Prize at the 1985 Hiroshima International Independent Film and Video Festival. The seven-minute color tape features a public affairs talk show with the late John Wayne (Tom Jarus) and Susan Hayward (Charlotte Colavin) debating whether they got cancer from natural causes. The tape is being translated into Japanese for the festival.

The School of Art of the California Institute of the Arts has completed a 45-minute video magazine entitled **Just a minute . . . TV works!**, a compendium of 60-second spots transferred to ¾″ and 1″ tape from a variety of two and three-dimensional formats. The work was solicited from "artists and people" all over the U.S. Among the 45 artists included in . . . *TV works!* are AIVF members Nancy Buchanan, Gary Duehr, and Matthew Geller.

Bethany Eden Jacobson's 10-minute color video, **All Exit's Final**, seeks to extend the metaphoric and moral implications of CIA mind control experiments of the 1950s and sixties to the present-day arms race, where "the politics of space and time are shaping the militarization of speed itself." The video was produced with the assistance of the Experimental Television Center in Owego, New York, and features actress Glenne Headley, with music by electronic composers Fred Szymanski and Jun Mizumachi. *All Exit's Final* premiered at VideoCulture in Toronto last November.

Space occupies a fond place in the memory of Nancy Yasecko of Columbia, South Carolina. Yasecko has garnered the Most Outstanding Southern Film Award at the 1985 Atlanta Film Festival with her one-hour documentary, **Growing Up With Rockets**, the story of the U.S. space program from the perspective of a young girl growing up near Cape Canaveral, Florida. The film combines archival footage, photographs, and home movies, with an original score by New York composer Pall Ill. *Growing Up With Rockets* will make its New York debut at the Flaherty Film Seminar in August.

New Jersey animator Michael Posch has completed a 17-minute color film, **Clarence the Wonder Dog**, about a six-foot dog of questionable behavioral standards who tames an unruly kindergarten class through creative redirection of the children's energy. The film won a bronze award for animation at the 1985 Houston International Film Festival and was funded by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Professor/filmmaker Andy Anderson has begun shooting his first feature film in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. **Positive I.D.** is the story

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The NASA-bred protagonist of Nancy Yasecko's documentary "Growing Up With Rockets."
Courtesy filmmaker

of a rape victim's psychological battle to maintain control of her identity. Anderson teaches film at the University of Texas/Arlington, and is the producer/director of several award-winning shorts, including *Ritual,* which appeared at the 1983 New Directors/New Films program in New York and won the grand award at the 1983 Houston International Film Festival. Anderson is co-producing *Positive I.D.* with Melissa Gatchel North.

There are eight million stories in the naked city, but most of them are really the same one: love is crazy, love is sad, and love usually ends one way or another. However, the number of ways that love can be portrayed seems inexhaustable.

In her highly personal and abstract film, **Gilt and Almond Oil,** S. Again depicts a lovers' triangle through poetry, creative and often humorous visual imagery, and unusual casting (including a character who is portrayed by a broom). The 22-minute, black-and-white film is shot by Conrad and narrated by actor John Shea, with vocals by Sheila Jordan. *Gilt and Almond Oil* previewed in March 1985 at New York City's Movielab.

The story of elderly gay and lesbian Americans is poignantly documented for the first time in **Silent Pioneers,** presented this past spring by Los Angeles's public TV station, KCET. Produced by Pat Snyder with executive producer Harvey Marks, and directed by Lucy Winer, *Silent Pioneers* profiles eight homosexual men and women, many in long-term relationships, but isolated from a supportive community and often in fear for their jobs and well-being. *Silent Pioneers* is available in two versions: the 28-minute PBS version, and the entire 42-minute film, which was broadcast on Norwegian TV this year. The film has been screened at Filmex in Los Angeles and the Athens International Film and Video Festival in Ohio, and it will screen at the Margaret Mead Film Festival in New York City and the 1985 International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival in San Francisco. Major funding was provided by the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York Council for the Humanities, and the Chicago Resource Center.

In other documentary news, Louis Hock's four-part public TV series, **The Mexican Tapes: A Chronicle of Life Outside the Law** depicts the various situations of undocumented Mexicans living in the U.S., and attempts to bring into proper focus the financial and cultural interdependence of the U.S. and Mexico, characterized as the "Latinization of North America" and especially evident in the southwest region of this country. Hock lived in a colony of 100 undocumented Mexicans in Solana Beach, San Diego for two-and-a-half years, chronicling their lives and their subsequent deportation back to Mexico in 1981. *The Mexican Tapes* is in English and Spanish with English subtitles, and was partially funded by the Western States Regional Media Grant and a University of California Research Grant. The series aired on KCET's *Presente!* last March.

Beth Dembitzer and Lauren Goodsmith of Key Light Productions have completed **Opening the Door,** a look at the programs provided for physically disabled teenagers at a multi-service youth center in New York City. The Door: A Center for Alternatives offers health services, vocational training, counseling and recreational activities for over 300 young people daily. The half-hour piece, which was commissioned by The Door, will be used for outreach and advocacy purposes.

Producer/director Andrei Jackamets of Phoenician Film Productions has completed **Above and Beyond,** a 28-minute video documentary about a traditional Eastern celebration in the tiny Russian community of Cassville, New Jersey. Every St. Thomas Sunday—the Sunday after Easter—generations of Russian Americans gather at St. Vladimer's Cemetery in Cassville to eat, drink, and be merry in the company of friends and relatives, both living and deceased. *Above and Beyond* contains archival footage from Cassville's heyday, when Russian immigrants from the textile mills of New York and New Jersey came by busloads to party from Friday night until Monday morning. Jackamets received funding for the project from the trustees of St. Vladimer's Cemetery and Jackson Ocean Cable Vision, a New Jersey cable company that will air the tape. "I found out there are no rules for finding funding," Jackamets said. "In the end, whatever works, works. It was an important lesson for me."

DISTRIBUTION DIRECTORY:
Eulogy: Lindsey Enterprises, 61 W. 68th St., NY NY 10023, (212) 595-5947; *Sunny Side of Life,* Appalshop Films, 306 Madison St., PO Box 743, Whitesburg KY 41858, (606) 633-0108; *Cunningham Dance Technique: Elementary Level (1985)* and *Deli Commedia:* Cunningham Dance Foundation, 463 West St., NY NY 10014, (212) 255-3130; *Debate of the Dead:* Betsy Newman and Ellin Stein, Electronic Arts Intermix, 84 Fifth Av., NY NY 10011, (212) 989-2316; *Just a minute. . . TV works!:* California Institute of the Arts, Valencia CA 91355, (805) 255-1050; *All Exit's Final:* Group Three Communications Project, Inc., 77 Reade St., NY NY 10007, (212) 964-8184; *Growing Up With Rockets:* Nancy Yasecko, PO Box 50141, Columbia SC 29250, (803) 791-3967; *Clarence the Wonder Dog:* Michael Posch, 50 Harmon Pl., N. Haledon NJ 07508, (201) 427-1395; *Positive I.D.:* Andersonfilm, PO Box 121612, Arlington TX 76012, (817) 461-1228; *Gilt and Almond Oil:* SCAF Films, 23 Greene St., NY NY 10013, (212) 925-5651; *Silent Pioneers:* Patricia Giniger Snyder, (212) 496-6952; *The Mexican Tapes: A Chronicle of Life Outside the Law:* Louis Hock, (619) 942-1354/452-2860; *Opening the Door:* Key Light Productions, 708 Greenwich St. #6B, NY NY 10014, (212) 989-8157; *Above and Beyond:* Andrei Jackamets, (718) 596-7745.

NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others included as space permits. Send notices to: **THE INDEPENDENT**, c/o AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012; attn.: Notices. For further information, call: (212) 473-3400. Deadline: 8th of second preceding month (e.g., July 8 for Sept. issue).

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Conferences ● Workshops

● *NATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN MEDIA CONFERENCE* sponsored by the Nat'l Asian American Telecommunications Assn. Major meeting of media professionals & activists to be held July 25–28 on the UCLA campus, Los Angeles. Workshops, screenings, panels on aesthetics, adapting performing arts to media, strategies for combatting media racism, community concerns, nuts & bolts, & more. Steve Tatsukawa Memorial Award to be presented at special ceremony. Registration, $30. Low-cost housing available. Contact: Jeanette Dong, NAATA, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 873-0814.

● *SUMMER VIDEO WORKSHOPS* at the Center for New Television. July: Videotape Editing, Part I, Edit Theory, Intro to Analog Image Processing & Videotape Editing, Part 2. August: Videotape Editing, Part 1. Contact: Center for New Television, 11 E. Hubbard, 5th fl., Chicago, IL 60611, (312) 565-1787.

● *MEDIA TRAINING COURSES* at Film/Video Arts. Time Code Intro for Independents, July 29–30. Videola Primer, July 24. 3-day ¾″ Videocassette Editing Workshop begins July 13 (discount deadline June 28) & August 10 (discount deadline July 25). Young People's Experimental Video Project, 5th–8th graders, begins July 9. Color Video Cameras: Practice & Theory, July 27–28 (discount deadline July 12). Contact: Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, NYC 10003, (212) 673-9361.

● *NORTH AMERICAN TELEVISION INSTITUTE* intensive full and half-day seminars on video production & management techniques. Chicago, July 9–12, The McCormick Center; Houston, August 13–16, The Westin Galleria. Contact: Knowledge Industry Publications, 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604.

● *DIRECTORS GUILD HOLLYWOOD WORKSHOP* sponsored by the American Film Institute. Intensive 8-day program w/ access to work-in-progress on film & TV stages, on location, in sound mixing studios, editing rooms & special effects houses. Seminars w/ leading industry professionals. Aug. 9–16 at Directors Guild Headquarters, Hollywood, CA. Contact: AFI, Education Services, POB 27999, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 856-7725.

Editing Facilities

● *QUALITY EDITING ROOM FOR LESS:* ¾″ & VHS-to-¾″ w/ Convergence Super 90, Tapehandlers, Adda TBC, fades, time-code reader-generator, overdubs. New equipment, comfortable & friendly environment, Lincoln Center area. $20/hr. during business hours for AIVF members editing non-commercial projects. Also available: experienced editors, scripting, Chyron. Hank Dolmatch TV Enterprises, (212) 874-4524.

● *VIDEO EDITING ROOM:* Quiet, bright, spacious, on NYC's Lower East Side. Independent & arts projects only, $15–20/hr. Flexible hrs. Jeff, (212) 475-4094, NY.

● *¾″ EDITING:* JVC 8250 w/convergence controller, $20/hr. Discounts for long-term projects. On Track Video, (212) 864-5166, NY.

● *SOHO ON BAYOU:* Kingfish Productions, direct from New Orleans, introduces its no-frills off-line editing suite w/ Sony 5850s & red beans 'n rice. Convenient SoHo location, low rates. (212) 925-8448, NY.

● *LUNAR VIDEO* offers complete ¾″ off-line edit system w/ 2 Sony VO 5850s, RM-440 & audio mixing. Available 8:30–6pm, M–F, $25/hr. Editor available, $10/hr. (212) 686-4802, NY.

● *FILM TITLE SERVICES:* Camera-ready art &/or shooting of titles. Many typefaces, design consultation, crawls. reasonable rates, fast service. (212) 460-8921, NY.

● *FOR RENT:* 6-plate Steenbeck editing room. Fully equipped incl. telephone. Special rates for independents. Bob Mack Prods., (212) 736-3074, NY.

● *SAN FRANCISCO ¾″ EDITING:* Sony Type 5 system, Beta & VHS dubbing. $15/hr. self-service; $25/hr. w/ operator. By appointment. Mermaid Productions, (415) 777-3105.

● *16MM NEGATIVE MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut at reasonable rates. (212) 228-7352, NY.

● *STANDBY PROGRAM AT MATRIX VIDEO* offers access to state-of-the-art video postproduction facilities at nominal rates. Raindance Foundation, 51 Fifth Ave., NYC 10003, (212) 582-8958.

● *NEW HORIZON STUDIOS:* Award-winning production house offers creative off-line editing in comfortable surroundings. Convenient midtown locations. System incl. Tapehandlers w/ new RM86U, TBC, 3M Proc, waveform, Ikegami title camera, CG, 16 ch. audio mixing, code capability, $90/hr. (212) 490-9082.

Films ● Tapes Wanted

● *DIRECTOR SEEKS INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO PRODUCTIONS:* Specialty in health care markets, but also interested in other subjects. Highly targeted, individualized marketing used to reach prime buyers. Contact: Motion Inc., 3138 Highland Pl. N.W. Washington, DC 20008, (202) 363-9450.

● *JEWISH FILM FOUNDATION* seeks documentary or fictional films/videos on Jewish subjects for PBS series. Length open. Also, newly-formed distribution cooperative seeks independent films/videos for all markets. Contact: Mimi Rosenbush or Beverly Siegel, 6025 N. Christiana, Chicago, 60659, (312) 478-9290.

● *INDEPENDENT VIDEO MAKER* seeks distributor for video shorts on social change. Call: (212) 628-0226, NY.

● *SAN FRANCISCO MIME TROUPE FOOTAGE SEARCH:* Archival film, video, Super-8, photos & related memorabilia of the group, 1960s to the present & cultural/political life of San Francisco Bay during the '60s needed for independent feature documentary. Glenn Silber, Catalyst Media, 1838 N. Mariposa Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 668-2545 or (213) 667-0795.

● *VINCENT CHIN DOCUMENTARY:* Films/tapes/Super-8 footage covering nationwide Asian American community organizing around the Chin case, 1982-present. Also archival footage, home movies, etc., of Detroit Chinatown and Asian American community. Negotiable fees. Contact: Film News Now Fnd., c/o 160 Fifth Ave., Suite 911, NYC 10010, (212) 243-2310.

● *NIPPON AUDIO VISUAL LIBRARY:* Tokyo-based film/video archive seeking descriptive materials, w/ prices, of films & videotapes dealing w/ Vietnam War & related topics. Please mail in duplicate to Gordon Hitchens, 214 W. 85th St., Apt. 3W, NYC 10024, (212) 877-6856/362-0254; or (516) 299-2114/299-2353.

● *LATINO CONSORTIUM* seeks programs of Latino themes for possible broadcast on public television. Will preview & select July 1–Sept. 30. Contact: Latino Consortium, 4401 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 667-9425.

● *FILM FOOTAGE WANTED:* Good clean, raw 16mm color film w/ international, interracial, interreligious themes. People, events, celebrations that reflect themes of peace on earth, man helping man, universal love of mankind, etc. Also pretty scenery. No sound necessary. Contact: Dennis Rasmussen, POB 161948, Sacramento, CA 95816, (916) 973-9933.

● *NICKELODEON CABLE* seeks short comedy pieces, 30 sec.–2 mins., for new children's (ages 9–12) program. ¾" & 16mm. Contact: Nickelodeon, 1133 Ave. of the Americas, NYC 10036 (212) 944-9519

Freelancers

● *VIDEOGRAPHER* w/ Sony M3 camera & broadcast gear available to shoot news, documentary, dance, etc. Full ENG package & crew as needed: commercial vehicle. Negotiable rates. L. Goodsmith, (212) 989-8157, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER* w/ Aaton, zoom & super speed, production package (camera, sound, lights). Fluent in French & English, understands Spanish. Ready to travel. Reels available. Maryse Best Alberti, (212) 431-6229, NY.

● *FULL SERVICE MEDIA CONSULTING:* Film, TV, radio, theater. Proposals, scripts, packaging, fundraising & national marketing campaigns, pitches & presentations to networks, cable companies, studios, foreign TV, funders incl. corporations, foundations, individuals, CPB, NEH, NEA. Concept development to completed works. Also resume & personal marketing service for producers, directors, writers. Diversified clientele: international & first-time producers a speciality. Highly experienced, demonstrated results. Barbara Sirota Productions, (212) 777-6011, NY.

● *SOUNDMAN:* Looking for work on feature or documentary. 10 yrs. professional w/ high quality gear available. Doug, (212) 489-0232, NY.

● *EXPERIENCED RESEARCHER/SCRIPTWRITER:* Looking for projects. Have worked on anthropological ventures, researched Native Americans in Manhattan & presently writing musical play. Ability in Spanish, Gwynne Verner, 423 Broome St., NYC 10013, (212) 925-4114.

● *FILM/VIDEO CAMERMAN:* 10 yrs. experience, mainly documentaries. Howard Gladstone, (312) 465-7506, IL.

● *KIND & REASONABLE MOVING COMPANY:* Production assistant w/van, $175/day. Weekly & hours rates. Household, airport, commercial. (212) 929-3570, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER* w/ 4+ yrs. varied experienced in film/video production, incl. production management, editing & titles design. Very organized & reliable. Kurt, (718) 446-8704, NY.

● *COMPOSER AVAILABLE* for film & video. Ex-visual artist sensitive to collaboration. Experienced in self-production, jazz, new music, electronic; classically-trained. Flexible & resourceful. Patrick Brennan, (718) 387-0015, NY.

● *TRANSLATOR:* Spanish & French. Sample tape of works done for Ministry of Education of Nicaragua. R. Pikser, (212) 222-0865, NY.

● *VIDEO PRODUCTION:* All broadcast formats. Packages start at $400 w/ operator, sound & grip. (212) 873-5449 or (212) 982-2406, NY.

● *VIDEO PRODUCTION RESOURCE/VIDEOGRAPHER* w/ assorted lightweight mobile broadcast gear for EFP coverage in IL, IN, & WI. Also familiar w/ CO, LA, AL & has places to stay in each one. 11 yrs. professional experience. Michael Clark, 405 Meadowlark Rd., Bloomingdale, IL 60108, (312) 894-8835.

● *COMPOSER SEEKS FILM & VIDEO PROJECTS:* Professional musician w/ 20 yrs. experience looking for filmmakers who need music written for their projects. Have performed for film & TV & w/ major artists incl. Michael Franks, Leonard Bernstein, Noel Pointer & others. Rick Cutler, (212) 246-1154, NY.

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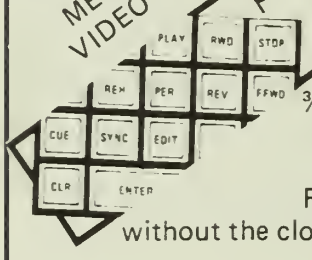
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● *LOCATION SCOUT* available to scout any location in the 5 boros of NYC & all 50 states. Services incl. photographic rendering of each location, photo processing & layout, location public relations. Debra Bergman, (212) 673-0034, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER* w/ 16 & Super 16mm Aaton package available for low-budget high quality 16 & 35mm features. Igor, (212) 794-2011, NY.

● *WRITER:* Member WGA East, available also as editorial copy consultant, proposals or treatment writer, reseacher or writer-producer. Experience in dramatic, industrials, docs & shorts. Allen Tobias, (718) 875-6198, NY.

● *AWARD-WINNING COMPOSER* interested in working w/ independent filmmakers. Has extensive Broadway & off-Broadway credits, incl. premieres by Tennessee Willians, Lanford Wilson, Marsha Norman, & has scored films for PBS & CBS Cable, Norman L. Berman, (212) 242-7293, NY.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER AVAILABLE* w/Sony DXC-M3A, new VO 6800, mics, lights & transportation for local, national & international industrials, docs, theater, dance, music. Variable rates. Video Jello, J. Maxtone-Graham, (718) 636-5590, NY.

● *PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/CAMERAMAN:* Ikegami 77. Production of your corporate/organizational documentary. $350/day. References on request for local & syndicated cablecasts. P. Greg Alland, (212) 420-0953, NY.

● *ANIMATOR:* Experienced working w/independents, title design, character animation a speciality. Storyboards. Reasonable rates for reasonable schedules. Sample reel. John Baumann, (212) 533-4705, (212) 254-6300 x294 & 331, NY.

● *WRITER/PRODUCTION ASSISTANT:* Experienced TV scriptwriting & production skills. Also have experience w/ video camera & postproduction. J. Brooks, Box 1108, 6151 N. Winthrop, Chicago, IL 60640, (312) 761-7036.

● *PRODUCTION MANAGER:* Complete, detailed budget & script breakdown. Also professionally experienced as AD & script supervisor. Will consider deferred payment. Roberta Posner, (212) 246-3778, NY.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER* w/ 16mm package available for features, shorts, commercials, docs, music videos, etc. Call to see reel(s). Cathy Zheutlin, (213) 828-2525, CA.

Opportunities ● Gigs

● *EXPERIENCED FILM EDITOR WANTED* for 1-hr. Black independent documentary, *A Question of Color.* Film explores intragroup values in Black American community through personal interviews, archival footage & photographs. Influence of slavery, apartheid & Black consciousness movement of the late 1960s explored. Sensitivity to American race relations extremely important. Kathe Sandler, 736 West End Ave., #1B, NYC 10025, (212) 864-4343.

● *GAFFER WANTED:* Camera crew w/ ¾" gear looking for film gaffer interested in developing video lighting skills. paid & spec. work. Send resume to: Imagelink Productions, 355 W. 85th St., Apt. 61, NYC 10024.

● *LINE PRODUCERS, PRODUCTION MANAGERS, ASSISTANT DIRECTORS:* Studio Ten is preparing to enter preproduction on several low & medium budget features. We are seeking non-union experienced production people as well as DPs, gaffers, editors, etc. Send resume to: Studio Ten, 32 W. 31st, NYC 10001.

● *EXHIBITION DIRECTOR WANTED* for Boston Film/Video Foundation, New England's major media arts center. For nationally recognized exhibition program showcasing experimental, documentary & narrative works. ¾ time, 9-month appointment, Sept. through May. Salary: $10,000 for 9 mos., ½ health coverage paid, vacation & equipment access provided. Please submit resume, 3 references, samples of programs, program notes & publicity materials to: David Madson, Executive Director, Boston Film/Video Foundation, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215.

● *THE RIBBON PROJECT:* Open call for video producers, home video enthusiasts, TV stations, public access operators, photogs, etc. to document The Ribbon Project, a 10-mile long ribbon of antinuclear/antiwar statements made by women & strung together on pieces of cloth. The ribbon will be unfurled from the Pentagon to the Capitol on August 4, 1985. Documentation of the event and its preparations will be coordinated by Academy Award-winning producer Nigel Noble. Contact: Nigel Noble, 22 Cheever Pl., Brooklyn, NY 11231, (718) 625-1099.

Publications

● *PRODUCER'S GUIDE TO MUSIC CLEARANCE* available free from The Clearinghouse, Ltd., the industry's only "full service" music rights clearance organization w/ extensive data base support & staff of attorneys & music clearances specialists. Revised edition of guide updated to include latest music problems faced by producers. Contact: Clearinghouse, 6605 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 200, Hollywood, CA 90028, (213) 469-3186.

● *COMMUNICATING IN THE '80S: NEW OPTIONS FOR THE NONPROFIT COMMUNITY* book & videotape describes successful ways nonprofits have put new technologies to use, incl. cable TV, microcomputers & satellites. Also addresses fundraising, publicity & media relations, consensus building & advocacy, and public education. Book, $3/copy. Video, $40 (¾"), and $30 (VHS & Beta) from The Benton Foundation, 1776 K St., NW, Ste. 900, Washington, DC 20006.

● *THE LEGEND OF MAYA DEREN: A DOCUMENTARY BIOGRAPHY & COLLECTED WORKS, VOLUME I, PART I:* Available from Anthology Film Archives *Signatures* (1917–1942), 544 pp., over 200 photographs & index. Send check or money order, $22.50 (paper), $40 (cloth) + $1.50 postage & handling to: Anthology Film Archives, 491 Broadway, NYC, (212) 226-0010.

● *NEW COPYRIGHT DIRECTORY,* by Jerome K. Miller contains information about individuals, rights & permissions searchers, government agencies, clearinghouses, associations & others involved in U.S. copyright. Send $23 ($18 to school, college & public libraries), plus shipping & handling to: Copyright Information Services, 440 Tucker Ave., Ste. F, Friday Harbor, WA 98250, (206) 378-5128.

Resources ● Funds

● *THIRD WORLD PRODUCERS PROJECT:* Film News Now Foundation provides free consulting

services in production/postproduction, budgeting, fundraising, exhibition, distribution & promotion. Also offers fiscal sponsorship. Interested in producers working on social issue & innovative video/film projects. Chris Choy or Renee Tajima, Film News Now, c/o 160 Fifth Ave., Rm 911, NYC 10010, (212) 243-2310.

● *FREE ONE-TO-ONE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR DISTRIBUTION* offered by the Film Fund to 12 completed or nearly-completed social issue films Consulting on choosing distributors, negotiating contracts, developing promotional campaigns. Seeking films in range of lengths, styles, topics. Minority, women, gay & lesbian filmmakers encouraged to apply. Applications accepted through August. Send video copy, project description & brief distribution plan to: Sam Sills, c/o The Film Fund, 80 E. 11th St., NYC 10003, (212) 475-3720.

● *AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS* film/video programs available to New England presenting organizations w/ subsidy assistance from the New England Foundation for the Arts. Provides cultural and educational institutions in 6 states of New England region w/ subsidy of up to 50% of presentation fees for public screenings. Contact: AFA, 41 E. 65th St., NYC 10021, (212) 988-7700.

● *ATTENTION WRITERS!!!* Are you seeking evaluations, sales development deals, or agency representation? For free info, contact: Flaming Rose Productions, 770 Princeton Ave., Metedeconck, NJ 08724, (201) 892-5552.

● *KEY LIGHT PRODUCTIONS* provides complete production services from project development & shooting through editing. Social service media a speciality. Full support staff w/ field producer, writers, researchers, PAs, crew as needed. Broadcast equipment, rates negotiable. Beth, (212) 581-9748, or Lauren (212) 989-8157, NY.

● *POSTPRODUCTION CONSULTING & EDITING* for all aspects of 16mm & 35mm film. Experienced in solving problems w/ opticals, lab procedures, archival footage, film-to-tape to transfers, etc. Credits incl. post-production supervisor of PBS series, technical consultant to film archives, & editor of productions using archival material. Steve, (718) 624-4142, NY.

● *TITLES, ANIMATION, OPTICALS:* Film Planning Associates offers 10% discount to AIVF members. Contact: FPA, 38 E. 20th St., NYC 10003, (212) 260-7140.

Trims ● Glitches

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Rose Lesniak for her 1st place blue ribbon in Drama Fiction/Literature at the 27th Annual American Film Festival for her video *The Manhattan Poetry Video Project.*

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Sandy Smolan for $100,000 grant awarded to the Minnesota Short Story project by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to New England Film/Video Fellowship winners Deborah Boldt for *Obsession;* Craig Davidson, *Black on White;* Tyler Dawson, *Mechanicsville;* Bonnie Donohue, *Africa Tapes;* Cindy Greenhalgh, *Gratitude;* Dan Hartnett, *Portal,* Richard Lerman, *Transducer Series: Neshkoro, WI;* R. Shams Mortier, *The Secret Dreams of Older Men;* Christian Pierce, *West African Ironmaking Remembered;* Virginia Sandman, *Woolf;* Leslie Thornton, *Peggy and Fred in Hell;* and Claire Andrade-Watkins, *No Pincha.*

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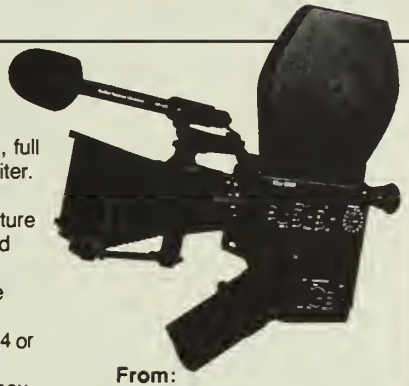
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INDEPENDENT BOOKSHELF

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The Independent Film & Video Makers Guide
by Michael Wiese, $14.95

How To Prepare Budgets for Film & Video
by Michael Wiese, $14.95

Motion Picture, TV & Theatre Directory
Motion Picture Enterprises, $5.95

Selected Issues in Media Law
by Michael F. Mayer, $2.50

Get The Money & Shoot
by Bruce Jackson, $15.00

Copyright Primer
by Joseph B. Sparkman, $3.50

Independent Feature Film Production
by Gregory Goodell, $7.95

Beyond Video: Media Alliance Directory I
Media Alliance, $2.50

Film & Video Service Profiles
Center for Arts Information
$5.00 (film), $6.75 (video)

The AIVF Guide to Distributors
by Wendy Lidell, Mary Guzzy
$7.00 members, $8.95 non-members

ShipShape Shipping
by Wendy Lidell, Victoria Cammarota
$3.00

To order by mail, add $1.00 to the price of each book to cover postage and handling. Make checks payable to AIVF and mail to: AIVF Books, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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DEPARTURES AND ARRIVALS

Susan Linfield, an associate editor of *The Independent* for the past two years and a member of the AIVF staff for four years, is leaving to become a senior editor of *American Film.* Susan's important contributions to the magazine—as writer, editor and colleague—have been central to sustaining and improving the magazine's content and charting new directions. Undoubtedly, the independent film and video community will continue to benefit from her intelligence and talents as she assumes her new position.

Debra Goldman, coordinator of FIVF's Screenings and Seminers Program, will succeed Susan as associate editor. *Independent* readers know Debra's fine work as contributing editor for the magazine, and we are pleased that she has now joined our editorial staff.

COLLECTIVE CATASTROPHE

On April 11, the opening night of the Collective for Living Cinema's spring season, an inspector from the New York City Department for Cultural Affairs served the nonprofit film exhibitor with a summons for "operating without a motion picture license." Six weeks later, following a hearing at the department, a padlock order from the city was posted at the Collective, giving the group 10 days to "seal the premises."

According to Theresa Weedy, the Collective's executive director, the organization has been operating its White St. theater since 1978 under a Certificate of Occupancy for a "motion picture studio with an occupancy of 25." Weedy sees no alternative to compliance with the city's order for extensive renovations and payment of the appropriate licensing fees, despite evidence presented at the April hearing that many of the building and fire codes in question are obsolete. The wheels of bureaucracy have been set in motion, and, in Weedy's view, the city has no choice but to enforce the regulations on the books. However, New York State Council on the Arts Film Program director B. Ruby Rich voiced concern about what "seems like a major policy shift." She questioned the department's decision to apply "the standards of commercial movie theaters," which are "absolutely inappropriate when considering the nonprofit exhibition sector."

The Collective will be able to complete its current program at other locations, but most likely will cancel its fall season. In order to satisfy licensing requirements, the group is seeking professional architectural, electrical, and plumbing services. Weedy estimates that the price tag for a new C of O will be $10,000–$20,000. Donations and letters of support can be sent to: The Collective for Living Cinema, 52 White St., New York, NY 10013, attn: Emergency Fund.

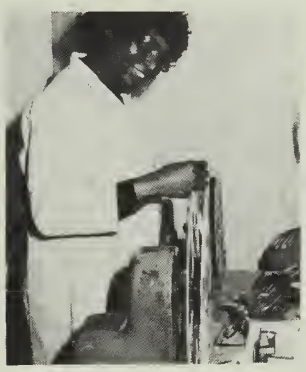
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The Contemporary Art Fund in Boston provided Joan Jonas with finishing funds for her videotape "Double Lunar Dogs," aired on WGBH as part of the CAT Fund series in November 1984. Debra Goldman's "CAT Fund: Video Art Catalyst?" traces the origins and operations of this experiment in cooperative support for video art.

Photo: Gwenn Thomas

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FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT

SEPTEMBER 1985
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 7

Publisher: Lawrence Sapadin
Editor: Martha Gever
Associate Editors: Debra Goldman
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Bob Brodsky
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Art Director: Bethany Eden Jacobson
Advertising: Barbara Spence; Marionette, Inc. (718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBoer 113 E. Center St., Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeezo Typography
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a not-for-profit, tax-exempt educational foundation dedicated to the promotion of video and film, and by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc. (AIVF), the national trade association of independent producers and individuals involved in independent video and film. Subscription is included with membership in AIVF. Together, FIVF and AIVF provide a broad range of educational and professional services for independents and the general public. Publication of **The Independent** is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

The Independent welcomes unsolicited manuscripts. Manuscripts cannot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included. No responsibility is assumed for loss or damage.

Letters to **The Independent** should be addressed to the editor. Letters may be edited for length.

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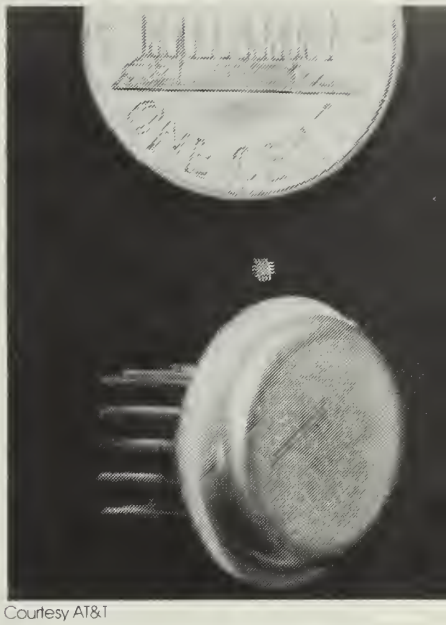
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Courtesy AT&T

COVER: Long-term struggles like the workers' occupation of Coca-Cola's Guatemalan bottling plant do not attract broadcast journalists, who look for dramatic action and easily identifiable protagonists. In "Truth and Consequences," Patricia Thomson examines independently produced foreign affairs documentaries that defy the predictable viewpoints, pace, and style of conventional public affairs programming.

LETTERS

STYLE WARS

To the editor:

In "Panels and Portions: Independents and the Program Fund" [June 1985], remarks attributed to me are used to form much of the basis for an indictment of the CPB Program Fund. I did not make certain of these remarks, and I disassociate myself from the indictment. Specifically, I did not make any statement that criticizes the responsiveness of the Program Fund staff. On the contrary, both as an applicant and panelist, I have found the people there not only responsive, but sensitive, aware, and objective. I also made no statement and expressed no opinion on the reader process.

Seeking to share experiences of the Program Fund with other independents, I expressed certain opinions to Susan Linfield. (I was told I would have the opportunity to review statements attributed to me *before* publication but, in fact, I was not given the opportunity to do so.) Specifically, I stated my belief in the need for an inviolable set-aside of funds for independents, in the related need for independent proposals to be evaluated separately from station/institution proposals, in the right of panelists to know the amount of money available to be awarded, in the value to the whole process for panelists to be able to make nominations for funding from the complete list at the same time they read staff-selected proposals—in other words, pre-panel. The article takes these views out of context and weaves them into a thesis which does little that is productive for independent producers.

The article makes slighting reference to the Fund's support for minority programming. When I served on the spring 1984 panel, I found Ron Hull's statements of the minority program mandate to be better than "guidance." I thought his statements made a positive and useful difference in the quality of our work and in what we ultimately recommended for funding, as I stated to Linfield.

I also informed Linfield that, as a panelist, my strongest impression was of the striking degree of commitment of the people at the Program Fund to maintaining a funding source for independent thought and work. This is not everywhere the case. It is regrettable that this opinion is nowhere represented in the article. It should have been.

Finally, I did tell Linfield that the future will be dim without a congressionally mandated set-aside for independents. But the key here is Congress, not the Program Fund. Another key is the ability of stations to understand and appreciate independent work. It is not enough to note this in passing, as does the article. This is the real problem that has to be addressed by independents and by the organizations and journals that seek to represent them.

—Tony Silver
New York City

Susan Linfield replies:

Tony Silver is certainly free to disassociate himself from my so-called "indictment" of the Program Fund. But he cannot disassociate himself from the remarks attributed to him, because they are all verbatim quotes from an on-the-record telephone interview we conducted on April 16. In this interview, Silver specifically criticized the responsiveness of the Program Fund staff and the effect that dropping the reader process has had.

As I reported, Silver did praise Ron Hull's handling of the minority mandate; the word Silver used to describe Hull's behavior was nothing more or less than "guidance." But *another* independent panelist whom I interviewed criticized the Program Fund's attitude toward minority proposals, and I quoted that person accordingly. Does Silver object to the reporting of any viewpoints besides his own?

Silver may disagree with my thesis, but the article never takes his views "out of context": throughout our interview, he expressed pessimistic thoughts about the Program Fund staff, CPB, and the situation of independents. Silver never told me that his "strongest impression" as a panelist was the "striking . . . commitment" of the Program Fund staff. At the end of our interview, he summed up his view of the situation by saying, "It's not a pretty picture."

I'm sorry that, after having freely shared his thoughts with *The Independent,* Silver now finds it necessary to disown them.

SOUND ADVICE

To the editor:

"3-D Sound," by Douglas Smith [May 1985], provided much valuable information, but there was one factual error I would like to correct. Smith states that phase cancellation of two microphones cannot be heard by the location recordist listening through stereo headphones. This may be true when using an ordinary non-film recorder, but all stereo Nagra IV-S machines have a switch that provides for mono monitoring through stereo headphones. This can be switched in and out at will without interfering with the stereo recording. When using a stereo recorder without this feature, do *not* try to solve the problem by wiring an adaptor that ties the stereo headphone outputs together into one signal. This is "line mixing," which results in level loss, intermodulation distortion, and possible damage to the headphone amplifiers. The stereo outputs of the recorder should be patched to a small outboard mixer with stereo/mono capability and a headphone output. That way, the recordist can monitor in either mode at any time, just as on a stereo Nagra.

—Reynold Weidenaar
New York City

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BUFFALO BILLS COME DUE

If you call Media Study/Buffalo in western New York State from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on weekdays, a receptionist will answer the phone. Once you've reached the center, however, you will find that there is no one there to speak to. Since last winter, Media Study, one of the oldest media centers in the state, has stood almost empty—no programs and no staff. Although Gerald O'Grady, the director since its inception, insists Media Study still exists, it is questionable whether that existence is anything more than an address, a telephone, and a dilapidated property in depressed downtown Buffalo.

In the mid-seventies, Media Study suffered a similar crisis. Survival was partially achieved by the donation of a building, a once grand hotel turned film production facility. The site included both attractive and unusual features. On the street level were a number of storefronts offering the promise of earned income. The film company had left behind a large sound stage and suites designed for editing facilities, perfect for a media access center. In the basement there was a swimming pool, formerly used by members of the hotel's health club, that, under the center's ownership, found a second life as an occasional recording studio. And there were six stories of space, more than Media Study's cramped, rent-poor downstate media center neighbors could imagine.

But instead of a lucky break, the gift turned out to be a white elephant. The building was already deteriorating when it came into Media Study's hands, and the Buffalo blizzard of 1977 made matters worse. Because Media Study only occupied a couple of floors, the unused portions of the old hotel fell into further disrepair. Operating costs built into the center's grants from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts helped with day-to-day maintenance costs, but were not intended to supply funds for necessary major repairs. Yet, even as these problems accumulated, Media Study continued to run highly regarded workshops and exhibition programs, some of which toured nationwide.

A second mortgage on the building was an obvious source of capital, but one condition of the gift was that it not be sold or remortgaged for five years to allow the donor the maximum tax benefit on his contribution. This proviso expired more than three years ago, yet a NYSCA fiscal review conducted in July 1983 noted Media Study had not yet filed a request for a mortgage, "although it has projected doing so for the past few years." The review was largely optimistic: downtown Buffalo was supposedly in the midst of "revitalization" and "maintenance costs have been reduced over the past with even further reductions projected in the future."

The future, when it came, aggravated, not alleviated, the chronic problems of the aging structure. In April 1984, the boiler broke, requiring replacement at a cost of tens of thousands of dollars. According to former staff members, O'Grady gave assurances that a new heating system would be installed as soon as the second mortgage came through. The typically brutal Buffalo winter arrived before the money did. "There was no heat, no water, no restrooms," Bruce Jenkins, former head of Media Study's film exhibition program, remembered. "We were finally told that we could and should work at home."

The problem was that there wasn't any work to do because there was no money to pay for programs. Staff confusion about where the money for programs had gone mingled with growing alarm at occasionally late paychecks and regret at Media Study's troubled condition. In March 1984, Media Study had received $27,000 from the NEA (another $21,000 was awarded in 1985). In the fall, the center's NYSCA grant, totalling $141,000 (including production funds earmarked for sponsored producers), had arrived. Nevertheless, production of *The Frontier*, a Canadian-U.S. video series produced at Media Study for the local public television station, was suspended. The film and video exhibition programs ceased. In January, Access Workshop coordinator Ken Rowe, already frustrated by the lack of attention paid to the equipment bank, stopped coming in. No one was laid off or fired; the staff simply drifted out of Media Study's employ over the first six months of this year. Although they saw the hopeless condition of the facility, they left without learning the causes for the cash crunch. O'Grady, who staff members say was solely responsible for the center's fiscal management, avoided their questions, and when he could not, insisted that loan money was imminent. O'Grady did not return *The Independent*'s repeated telephone calls to his office at SUNY/Buffalo, where he directs the university's media study and educational communications centers.

Among the many unanswered questions about Media Study's current condition, several concern *The Independents*, the two-part Learning Channel cable series [see below] that O'Grady produced last year. One of the bright spots of NYSCA's 1983 fiscal review had been the prospect of "a major grant" of $690,000 from the MacArthur Foundation for this cable project (the actual amount of the grant was $666,000). NYSCA calculated that $100,000 of these funds would go to Media Study as cosponsoring institution, and part would be used to retire outstanding long-term debts. Although production of the series occupied O'Grady and other staff members for much of 1984, no one was aware of any benefits from this windfall; to the contrary, some wondered if it was part of the financial drain. Staff members report that, in conversation, O'Grady admitted that the series cost more than he had expected, and Rowe knew of at least one VTR that was lost in service to *The Independents* and never replaced.

Despite the extreme situation, John Minkowsky, the former director of video exhibition at Media Study who now lives in Baltimore, said, "I've never gotten the impression from O'Grady that Media Study is down and out." But, he added, "Buffalo is not necessarily such a stable or strong environment to allow an institution like this to revive." O'Grady and Sheldon Berlow, a local real estate businessman and, according to the staff, the only member of Media Study's board actively involved in the organization, are more optimistic and still trying to get a second mortgage on the building; they are prepared to start renovation as soon as the money arrives.

Media Study's future depends primarily on NYSCA, which reviewed the center's 1985/86 grant proposal in August (after this issue went to press). NYSCA can hardly look kindly at the fact that its 1984/85 grant yielded little programming, and yet the agency has an interest in maintaining a media center in western New York. It is highly doubtful that, if Media Study folded, another institution could take its place. Still, it would be futile to fund programs without a staff or a habitable structure; Media Study lacks both. In the meantime, the center's building becomes less attractive to a lender with each day. Without a friendly banker, or NYSCA's faith that a friendly banker can be found, Media Study's crumbling abode will likely become another derelict building in a deteriorating northeastern city.

—Debra Goldman

THE LEARNING CHANNEL: ROUND TWO

With a generous hand from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Learning Channel (TLC) begins the second pro-

duction cycle of its series *The Independents* this fall. On June 13, MacArthur announced the series would receive $780,178, up from 1984's award of $666,000. MacArthur's enthusiasm for the project will likely elicit the same from the National Endowment for the Arts, which contributed $100,000 to last year's *Dis/patches* and *Agenda* series. The first part of this year's cycle is expected to premiere in March 1986.

At presstime, Robert Shuman, the Learning Channel's executive vice president in charge of the series, had not decided who the curators of the compilation series would be, but indicated they would be "established" figures, "definitely working within the independent structure." The series guidelines were decided earlier this year: one will feature biographical and autobiographical films and tapes, and a second will showcase independent works that have, in Shuman's words, "affected our consciousness" over the last two decades. Originally, the retrospective series was to be exclusively devoted to documentary; now Shuman is considering including fiction as well. "We won't make any decisions on that until the curators are chosen. We want to give them some freedom in the process."

Should everything go according to plan, viewers will not have to be up and at their TV sets by 11 a.m. Sunday morning in order to see the series, as was the case last year. By March, TLC hopes to expand its current 11 a.m.–4 p.m. schedule to 24 hours. This will enable *The Independents* to move into prime-time. Shuman reports that TLC is considering a number of offers from parties willing to finance the expanded schedule but, he admits, "In addition to money, we're looking for a group that will supply some synergy to what we're doing. In that respect, I'm not completely satisfied yet." In the meantime, TLC has an option on a satellite transponder to deliver a 24-hour signal.

Between the end of the first series in May 1986 and the second, which will run from early October to the end of the year, TLC will schedule a repeat of an earlier series. This strategy—seven months of regular prime-time exposure of independent work within a nine-month period—is the key to the company's desire to create "a perception of value" for their programming since only that will convince a cable operator to pay the Learning Channel three–five cents for every subscriber. Shuman remains upbeat about independents' potential influence on the perceived value of TLC. "The audience for *The Independents* is a small sliver of our cable universe," he stated. "Put all those splinters together and you have a critical mass that makes it attractive."

Shuman expected the submission process to begin in August. All submissions will be handled by the curator and his or her affiliated media center. *Do not send* films or tapes to the Learning Channel. For more information, check the bulletin board or newsletter of your local media center, or contact TLC, (202) 331-8100. —*DG*

THE ECONOMICS OF ART 101

There is a strange cloud of secrecy surrounding plans for a television series on art education, jointly conceived and sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the J. Paul Getty Center for Education in the Arts, based at the Getty Museum in Malibu. The series of 26 half-hour programs geared to eight- to 10-year olds and funded to the tune of at least $6-million—a major project by NEA standards—will be overseen by Lani Lattin Duke, director of the Getty Center, and Julia Moore, programming in the arts coordinator at the NEA Media Program. Moore has been especially evasive about the process of soliciting proposals from production entities, the composition and procedures of advisory and peer panels for the project, and the amounts of grants awarded—even after grants had been finalized. Questioned in July about these decisions, Moore refused to say whether the National Council on the Arts, the highest level advisory body in the federal arts agency, had approved funding for several pilot programs for the series, when, in fact, the Council voted on these last spring. In reply to an inquiry about the pilots, Moore asked, "What pilot?" After repeated telephone calls, Moore and Duke, who would only speak indirectly, through Vicki Rosenberg, project manager at the Getty Center, finally confirmed that two pilots had been selected from about 50 applicants and funded for $350,000 apiece.

Why this lack of candor? Frank Hodsoll, the chair of the NEA, has repeatedly declared that art education will be a priority of the agency. In the Winter 1984 issue of *Arts Review,* an official NEA magazine, Hodsoll outlined a number of educational strategies to make art as "basic" as the three Rs—including "using the unique capacities of television." As early as last April, Hodsoll publicly announced the Getty-NEA collaboration, giving essentially the same information Moore initially withheld. Duke, however, was more forthcoming, and Moore eventually confirmed that the Endowment and the Getty have committed funding for the project's research and development and the pilots. The total figure the NEA intends to allocate for the series remains imprecise, but Moore said that the majority will come from the Media Program budget, supplemented by funds from the Artists in Education Program, which supports artists-in-residence. Guidelines framed by the project's advisory panel, composed of 16 educators, critics, and representatives from public TV and children's television advocacy groups, state that "with results satisfactory to both [the NEA and the Getty], each is committed to funding a portion of the series and assisting the [producer] in seeking other funding partners." The names of the two applicants chosen to produce the pilots have not yet been revealed, because, according to Moore, the money is not in the applicants' hands. Again, this silence seems inappropriate, since Endowment awards are generally made public once approved.

Education as a hot topic at the NEA coincides with the overall conservative drift of the agency under Hodsoll and neatly fits the arguments made by Samuel Lipman, publisher of the conservative art journal the *New Criterion* and a Reagan appointee to the National Council on the Arts. In "Cultural Policy: Whither America, Whither Government?" in the November 1984 issue of his publication, Lipman enumerates a laundry list of problems he attributes to current NEA cultural politics. An advocate of "art created to endure" and "art as a carrier of civilization, as a cornerstone of its own liberty," Lipman criticizes the NEA's support of programs that "entertain" rather than "instruct" and refers to the *Great Performances* and *Live from...* series. However, Lipman has even harsher words for less traditional cultural offerings, claiming that various constituencies, notably minorities and the avant-garde, have been "bought off" by the NEA, which gives them "special programs in which they only compete with themselves."

Lipman's antidote for these "art circuses," as he calls them, is education. Assuming that culture's proper role is in "making one people out of many, of building a social unity out of a pluralistic culture," Lipman sees education—and the NEA—as the proper agent for this mission. Lamenting the fact that "group pressures and bureaucratic foot dragging," a euphemism for resistance to his conservative agenda, were making it hard to "restore administrative integrity and a sense of quality," Lipman concluded, "In particular, it has proven amazingly difficult to improve NEA arts education programs." Is it the "group pressures" that Lipman perceives and the possibility of criticism that has made NEA staff members so tight-lipped about their big education project?

For media independents, art education seems to fill the role assigned to film preservation during the past few years. Both initiatives involve big chunks of Media Program money, and both imply an emphasis on consumption rather than production. (In the case of film preservation, the majority of the funds are being spent to save Hollywood films.) Moreover, both projects involve the selection of worthy cultural artifacts. In light of this, it is indeed educational to quote Lipman's article again: "I count myself, after all, a conservative, and the purpose of conservatism is not revolution but conservation, not of the perfect but of the best." —*Lucinda Furlong*

Lucinda Furlong is curatorial assistant in the Film and Video Department at the Whitney Museum of American Art.


FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
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FLYING TIGERS

"It's 8:30. Do you know where your brains are?" Every week, this question is posed to viewers of *Paper Tiger Television,* perhaps the nation's best known ongoing public access series. Often produced live for a Manhattan cable audience, bicycled tapes of the show also play on access channels around the country. Now, a $39,000 Massachusetts State Council on the Arts and Humanities grant, funneled through the Boston Film and Video Foundation, will make it possible for the *Paper Tiger* collective to deliver its low-tech programming via high-tech satellite.

The project, made public at the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers' annual national conference in July, is still being formulated. Originally conceived as a single program venture, *Paper Tiger*'s satellite working group is now trying to apportion the money for an eight-week series. "There have been a few one-shot alternative satellite projects," observed collective member Caryn Rogoff. "The reaction is always 'How neat!' but then, 'So what?' The point is to build a satellite network of progressive independent and public access groups around the country.

"The idea is to combine a *Paper Tiger* show with locally produced news segments to create an hour-long program," Rogoff continued. "Local cable producers are doing a lot of interesting work they'd like to share." In the near future *Paper Tiger* plans to send out a call for issue-oriented tapes. Selected local tapes will probably be combined with a *Paper Tiger* show and put up on the satellite from a single uplink.

Arlen Swoboda of the Public Interest Video Network in Washington, D.C. will help develop logistics for the project. The group hopes to put the shows on PBS's Westar satellite in the early morning hours when satellite services are "cheap and the signal is easy to pull down because there are not a lot of other programs being transmitted," Rogoff explained. To ensure widespread availability, *Paper Tiger* is also researching Satcom II and Galaxy II. The shows will be offered free to cable systems, but local public access groups will have to convince cable operators to tape the shows and reschedule them for viewing.

Although *Paper Tiger*'s satellite debut, now targeted for February 1986, may originate live from BF/VF, the remaining programs will likely be tapes from the collective's growing library. It would be possible to beam the local segments directly from their points of origination, but that option depends on the uplink capacities of individual cable systems. To find out the extent of prospective partners' technological capabilities, the collective distributed a questionnaire to interested groups at the NFLCP conference. Access producers from all corners of the country responded: Tampa, Florida; Concord, New Hampshire; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Cincin-

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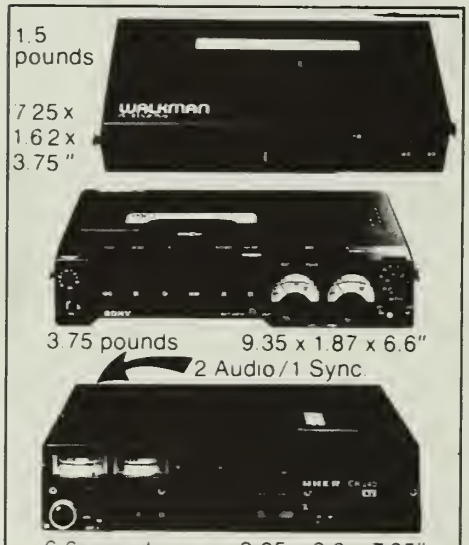
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Photo: Chris Beaver

nati, Ohio; and Austin, Texas. Other independent producers and public access organizations interested in joining the network or contributing a segment should write for a questionnaire and further information to: Paper Tiger TV, 165 W. 91st St., New York, NY 10024. —*DG*

READE GIFT TO LINCOLN CENTER

The Film Society of Lincoln Center has announced plans to build a new cinema complex, made possible by a gift of $1.2-million from the Walter Reade Foundation. Scheduled to open in 1989, the Walter Reade Theater will have state-of-the-art film and video hardware, including 70mm projection, and will operate year-round at the Lincoln Center complex in New York City.

According to film coordinator Jack Barth, screenings at the new theater will develop out of existing Film Society programs. For example, the earlier works of directors being highlighted at the New York Film Festival or New Directors/New Films series will be shown, or screenings may be keyed to feature articles in the Society's publication *Film Comment*. Barth compared the new theater's programming to New York's Film Forum, which has been a major venue for independently produced and foreign films.

The $1.2-million pledge is made in memory of Walter Reade Jr., who was the head of the Reade theater chain. Reade was killed in 1973 in a skiing accident in St. Moritz, Switzerland.

—*Renee Tajima*

NAKAMURA AND DING RECEIVE AWARD

Veteran filmmakers Robert Nakamura and Loni Ding were named the first recipients of the Steven J. Tatsukawa Memorial Award for achievement in promoting creative expression and opportunity for Asian Americans. The award was established in memory of Tatsukawa, a long-time media and community activist and former director of Visual Communications. Prior to his death last year at the age of 35, Tatsukawa was program development manager at KCET/Los Angeles.

The honors were announced at a July 27 reception, at the close of the National Asian American Media Arts Conference, sponsored by the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) in Los Angeles. Ding, a board member of AIVF and the Film Fund, almost singlehandedly organized the first national Asian American media conference in 1980 that led to the formation of NAATA. She is a video- and filmmaker, and teaches at the University of California/Berkeley. Nakamura was a founder of Visual Communications, where he directed a number of films, including the first Asian American feature *Hito Hata: Raise the Banner*. He is now a tenured faculty member at the UCLA film school, where he has fought for minority admissions and a greater emphasis on independent production. The Memorial Award will be made annually by the Steven J. Tatsukawa Memorial Fund Committee. —*RT*

CHILDCARE

Children's television, which has become a priority for funding dollars recently, has gotten another boost. Both the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation have awarded matching grants totaling $50,000 to the American Children's Television Festival. The festival was co-founded by the Central Educational Network and WTTW/Chicago to foster quality and quantity in children's programming. The first festival screening and competition will be held on October 20–23 at the Drake Hotel in Chicago. *—RT*

EXECUTIVE PLACEMENTS

Susan Christian has been named executive director of the Black Filmmaker Foundation in New York City... Cynthia Hickman will assume Christian's position there as distribution manager... Richard Abromowitz has been promoted to national sales director of Cinecom International Films, and Bingham Ray, formerly general sales manager at New York Films, will be Cinecom's new regional sales manager... Linda Mabalot is now full-time director of Visual Communications in Los Angeles... Worth Long is the new executive director of the Atlanta Media Project at Clark College. *—RT*

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BUYING TIME: PUBLIC TV LOOKS TO THE FUTURE





Greetings from Marseilles: PTV representatives and independent producers debated public television's cloudy future under blue Mediterranean skies.

Lawrence Sapadin

Every conference has a tone that builds from the one-liners heard during the first coffee break—"What do you think of this year's conference?"—to a full-scale critique by the end of the event. At the International Public Television Screening Conference held in Marseilles, France from April 14–20, Mike Fentiman, INPUT president from the British Broadcasting Corporation, sounded this note at the closing press conference: "The overall quality of the programming at INPUT was as high as ever, but there were fewer programs taking risks, using a different grammar, that were unconventional." According to Fentiman, this reflected public television activity around the world. The reasons for this increased caution and conventionality, particularly the impact of commercial sponsorship on public broadcasting, provided the conference's central theme.

At the opening plenary session where Fentiman greeted this year's 570 delegates, he defined INPUT by what it's not: "It's not a product, but a process. Not a festival. Not a competition." Rather, "INPUT is a conference" where public broadcasters and independent producers from around the world meet to view and discuss the form, content, and conditions of production of programs that appeared on public broadcasting during the preceding year. And, since the limitations of public broadcasting are acknowledged, work that has been rejected for broadcast is also eligible for programming at INPUT.

Originally, INPUT was conceived in the mid-seventies by Howard Klein of the Rockefeller Foundation as a vehicle to promote the international exchange of public television programs—especially to expose U.S. public television programmers to innovation. The conference has grown over the years and introduced many public TV representatives to the wealth of available international programming, but until this year it seemed that the goal of bringing high quality international fare to the U.S. public would remain illusory.

One of the highlights of the 1985 conference, then, was the announcement that South Carolina Educational Television will package a selection from INPUT for U.S. broadcast over PBS. The series, *International Television Revue,* was described by Tom Stepp, SCETV senior vice president, in *Current,* the public broadcasting trade newspaper, as "both a study in current television and a means of bringing new understanding of international affairs through the television of the people of the world. It will use arts and humanities programs as well as those devoted to public policy issues." The series will consist of about 12 segments and is said by Stepp to have PBS's cooperation in scheduling "for maximum audience impact."

In Marseilles, INPUT screened nearly 90 programs from 25 nations. Programs were selected by a dozen "shop stewards" who holed up in Baden-Baden screening 300 submissions, the results of a preselection process in each country. According to Sergio Borelli, INPUT vice president and international program coordinator, the committee identified programs that fit within five general groupings. The categories were: programs treating the problems of our time, social and personal alike, under headings like "The Age of Anxiety," "Law and Disorder," "TV Taboos," and "The Battle of the Sexes"; programs as a catalyst for change, "TV and Politics"; contemporary representations of the past, "TV Looks Back"; "Storytelling"; and TV used for the creation and recording of art work, "Art and Artists." U.S. independents were well-represented, including Emiko Omori's *The Departure,* Bill Viola's *Anthem,* Billy Woodberry's *Bless Their Little Hearts,* and many more.

As in past years, INPUT obtained funds to subsidize attendance by independent producers whose work was selected for screening. For an independent, this provided an opportunity to see a broad range of TV production not generally available in the U.S., to meet other producers —independent and nonindependent—and to discuss one's work with an attentive and enthusiastic audience of producers and programmers. Unfortunately, INPUT has announced that it may not be able to continue this subsidy.

In addition to the multiple screenings and animated talk about the programs shown, this year's central topic was debated at length during a mid-week symposium "Sponsorship: A New Challenge for Public Television." Here, James Day, a pioneer in the development of U.S. public TV; INPUT '85 host Michel Fansten of the Institut National de la Communication Audiovisuelle (INA), the French broadcasting authority; banker Jean-Paul Escande; journalist J.F. Lacan from *Le Monde*; and Fentiman tackled various questions about the effects of private sponsorship on the future of public service broadcasting.

The French panelists seemed relatively blase about the rise of commercial involvement in their television system. Escande, of Societe Marseillaise de credit, opened the discussion by equating enterprise with cultural endeavor. Fansten identified the underlying problem as rising production costs leading to a greater reliance on international coproduction and the need for "new partners." He also acknowledged the risk that, as a result, all TV production may become

subject to commercial standards. Jacques Pomonti, president of INA, however, told a Marseilles newspaper that he thinks public broadcasting might benefit from competition with the private sector. In contrast, Lacan saw underwriting as the worst solution to money problems, since it neither insulated programming decisions from commercial pressures nor provided the sponsor with an explicit product advertisement.

It was left to Day and Fentiman to challenge the fuzzy rhetoric about "new partnerships" and "the spirit of enterprise." Day presented a history of commercial sponsorship in the U.S., pointing out that PTV underwriting replicates early radio and television models, when individual companies paid for—and frequently produced—entire programs. Over the years, the increased cost of commercial TV production caused the demise of the system of single sponsorship, replaced by the now familiar clusters of 30- or 60-second advertising spots. At the same time, advertising remained taboo for noncommercial PTV. Disclosure regulations, however, required that audiences be informed about the source of corporate contributions. Thus, the birth of understated PTV underwriting credits.

Following the 1981 budget cuts, PTV executives and Congress realized that underwriting credits provided too little incentive to expand corporate support of public broadcasting. Congress, therefore, authorized an advertising experiment which has resulted in the authorization of "enhanced underwriting": quasi-commercials that avoid the hard sell, but employ corporate logos and discrete references to specific products.

The real question, however, is not good taste, but whether this increased level of commercial involvement affects what's on the air. Many PTV representatives claim that it does not. Day believes that it does. In his view, commercial support influences the *shape* of PTV programming by discouraging the production and broadcast of programming which would make a potential sponsor "uneasy," favoring instead more palatable science and cultural programming. Day accompanied his remarks with a depressing compilation reel of clips showing the evolution of underwriting credits on PTV in the U.S. He believes the system has gone beyond the point of no return, and told a sobered audience, "The future holds the end of public service television as we know it." And he refused to predict that other technologies—cable, home video, and satellites—would step in to provide the alternative to commercial broadcasting that public television was meant to be.

Fentiman, too, attacked the loose talk about the creative relationship between culture and commerce, focusing instead on the "politics of public television." "The decision to take sponsorship," he cautioned, "has political significance. It changes the broadcaster's relationship with the public and even with its own employees. If we talk about sponsorship, we must pose the question of why we want public television."

Day's and Fentiman's concerns were echoed from the floor, with many delegates expressing serious concern about the future of their national TV services. A delegate from the Federal Republic of Germany noted that even though German state television has allowed commercial sponsorship in the past without ill effects, the advent of commercial television means that German public TV now has to compete for advertisers and therefore is pressured to broadcast more commercially viable programs.

William Kobin, president of KCET in Los Angeles, argued that stations are still relatively free to program what they choose since corporate support amounts to only 14 percent of a public television station's budget. That statistic, however, doesn't reflect the disproportionate impact of corporate dollars on programming; corporate support specifically underwrites programs, while discretionary membership and government dollars tend to be applied to overhead, administration, and other expenses that are only indirectly related to programming.

More than simply a marketplace issue, this crisis in public broadcasting is political. At the final INPUT press conference, Sergio Borelli pointed out that the international politics of deregulation encourage greater private sector control over telecommunications, previously considered a public resource. "We are under massive attack as public broadcasters," he said. "The state says that it has too little money, but that's a political decision."

For Fentiman, the demise of public service broadcasting would be a defeat for democracy. In an interview with a local newspaper, he stated that if the rising tide of commercialism is not stopped, "It will not be Big Brother who watches us, as George Orwell predicted, but precisely the opposite. We will have nothing to watch on TV but Big Brother: Big Brother dancing, singing, giving the latest news; Big Brother on cable, satellite, and broadcast TV; Big Brother on all the channels, all the time. No more choice. Finished."

INPUT has continued to provide an important, unique international forum for the discussion of public broadcasting programs and policies. Unfortunately, there is no U.S. equivalent to encourage such conversations within the U.S. public television community. As a result, discussions at INPUT, while intense and often emotional, can also have an abstract, even ironic quality. At the conference's conclusion, Fentiman noted that people who had vociferously opposed sponsorship in Marseilles would go back to their local stations and resume their search for underwriting money to complete their projects. A reporter asked whether this wasn't hypocrisy. "No," Fentiman replied, "one of life's contradictions."

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TALE OF TWO CITIES: THE 1985 MIDWEST FILM AND VIDEO CONFERENCE

Neil Seiling

The first annual Midwest Film and Video Conference, held on April 25–27 at the St. Paul Hotel in downtown St. Paul, was billed as the only event on the nuts and bolts of the film and video industry outside of the New York-L.A. axis. Over 300 people attended the conference, cosponsored by the St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development (PED) and the Minnesota Motion Picture and Television Board. The conference organizers listed three goals for the event; to give film and video producers up-to-date information about distribution, financing, and new technologies; to bring local and regional producers together with professionals from outside the region; and to promote the Twin Cities and the Midwest as a center for film and video production.

Many of the invited speakers came from the high-rolling private film and television industry, although the program included several representatives of nonprofit production groups and exhibition outlets. Also on the roster were a few German producers as well as crystal ball gazers who described wondrous new technologies. What conference of this sort would be complete without a representative from George Lucas's Industrial Light and Magic dream factory?

Much talk at the conference revolved around the recent boom in media production in the region. It's been a well-kept secret that the Twin Cities area is the fourth largest center of film/video production in the U.S., although the low profile is probably due to the unglamorous educational media and commercials that account for the health of the local industry. Lately, however, *Purple Rain* put the area on the entertainment map, along with feature-length films like *Wild Rose, Purple Haze,* and *The Personals.* Co-productions with Sundance Institute are also being cultivated. Such projects not only boost the collective metropolitan ego; they also indicate potential revenue sources. For instance, St. Paul's PED estimates that over $2.5-million was spent in the city as a result of the filming of S.E. Hinton's *That Was Then, This Is Now,* produced by Media Ventures, a local company.

Even though most of the official business at the conference centered on projects with budgets over $1-million, the independent producers in attendance picked up some valuable information. Dan Appleby and Bruce Carlson managed to send copies of their new videotape, *The Larger Picture,* home with five representatives from German production companies. Kate Kinney, project associate for the Minnesota Short Story Project, who is working with director Sandy Smolan on a film adaptation of stories by Carol Bly slated for production this fall, agreed that the conference provided "helpful information as well as visibility and credibility for the Short Story Project."

This sort of optimism pervaded the three days' proceedings. The marketplace viability of films and videotapes was taken for granted. But, unlike the tax shelter incentives and the intangible glamor of the entertainment industry that attracted investors in earlier years, tax law changes have created a climate where investors expect a profit. In conjunction with the conference, John Taylor, co-chair of the event and senior vice president for public affairs for First Bank St. Paul, convened a private investors' luncheon where a room full of experienced film investors, lawyers, bankers, and investment house personnel attended closely to local boosters from both the producing and financial communities. According to Taylor, the luncheon was intended to "ascertain the interest level of [potential investors] and to take the mystique out of film financing—to get to simple everyday terms."

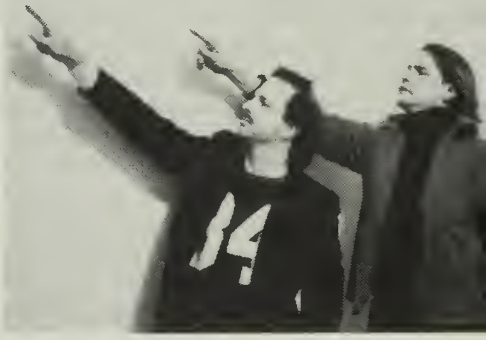
One hedge against the financial risks of filmmaking suggested by luncheon speakers was rigorous marketing research and frequent spending reports as a prerequisite for obtaining completion bonds. If such conditions are imposed, Jane Eastwood of the PED believes, film financing becomes as safe an investment as, say, real estate. The demands potential investors should impose were repeatedly illustrated by sagas of disastrous cost overruns incurred by producers; the favorite example was *The Cotton Club.*

Independent producers balked at taking the rap for excesses like those that plagued *The Cotton Club.* In fact, independents were cited in many discussions as more likely than their Hollywood counterparts to keep costs down, thus helping ensure eventual profits. And cost cutting need not imply amateurishnness. Tim Ney, conference coordinator, former director of the Independent Feature Project, and organizer of a new Minnesota production company, Harvest Films, coined the term "specialized films" to refer to what are commonly called "low-budget films." In Ney's view, "specialized films" take advantage of the resourcefulness of independent producers in keeping the lid on costs by obtaining concessions from unions and deferrals from production houses and labs. Such measures may be better classified as "cutting corners" than "trimming fat," but a talent for minimizing costs can improve investors' confidence.

While many were pleased to learn about funding available outside the the convoluted nonprofit scene, some voiced concern about marketplace pressures and how these might affect their creative freedom. After attending several panels, Appleby compared the growth of private financing of regional production with Hollywood, where "the whole industry is in the hands of financiers and accountants." The response of conference organizer Eastwood to such sentiments was that producers simply need to be more businesslike and accept the responsibility of repaying investors first when revenues are generated. But how will the energy and willingness to work cheaply change when the first objective for a project becomes repaying large loans to investors rather than satisfying a more personal vision? Co-founder of the independent production group Kartemquin Films Gordon Quinn expressed some reservations about banking on good business practices alone to attract investors. He believes instead that such decisions are still founded on the unquantifiable allure of



Jane Eastwood of the St. Paul PED, city mayor George Latimer, and conferee Bob Tracy discuss the future of feature film production in the Midwest.



Producers Dan Appleby (left) and Bruce Carlson set their sights toward Germany after connecting with German distribution representatives at the 1985 Midwest Film and Video Conference.

the entertainment industry. And he found the prospects for film financing discussed at the conference "a bit optimistic."

Panelist Tim Grady, a programming consultant for a local theater chain, proposed a series of case studies in order to make future discussions of revenues vs. costs less speculative. He projected one common denominator that would emerge from such research: international marketing. Other conferees joined in a solid consensus on the potential for returns from ancillary markets—home video, pay cable, along with foreign distribution—as selling points for producers in search of investors. Frank Carr, assistant vice president for entertainment and media at European American Bank, mentioned that his institution considered ancillary rights as sufficient collateral for loans to producers.

One promising new development brought into focus at the conference is the active participation of local and state governments in encouraging media production. Determined to capitalize on local resources and on increased visibility for the local entertainment industry—i.e., Prince's success—Minnesota governor Rudy Perpich has strongly supported the expansion of the Minnesota Motion Picture and Television Board. The other conference co-sponsor, the St. Paul PED, received the backing of the city's ebullient mayor George Latimer, who has taken a personal role in promoting St. Paul as a site for media production. Latimer attended the conference and, in one of the multiple press releases issued at the event's conclusion, announced a program that would directly involve the city as a financier of video and film productions based in St. Paul. Eastwood likened the city's proposed role to that of a catalyst for developing a private pool of investment funds for production, akin to venture capital. The city government is now researching related models for this project, since it would be the first of its kind. Although city involvement in the selection of films or tapes raises complex questions about decisions on what's fundable, the plan indicates the energetic support for media in St. Paul.

Curiously, the location for the 1986 conference has become an object of contention between assertive St. Paul and sister city Minneapolis. The rivalry will probably increase funding and visibility for the conference, and a year's preparation, as opposed to two months this year, should also prove helpful. Such local commitment and enthusiasm reflects the ambitious visions for media production in the region, which everyone seems to share. One post-conference press release went so far as to dub the Twin Cities "The North Coast."

Neil Seiling is exhibitions coordinator at UC Video and programs Channel 40 of Minneapolis's cable system.

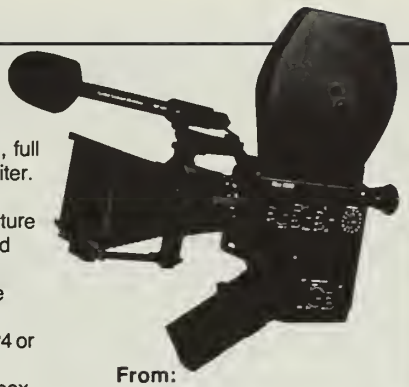
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FILM-TO-TAPE, PART III: TRANSFERRING A & B ROLLS

David Leitner

What's a producer to do? After endless technical dilemmas—which format, which film stock, which camera, which lenses, what exposure, what lighting approach—an acceptable 16mm answer print is finally threaded in the projector. But the fun isn't over. Directly ahead lies another imbroglio: how best to get the film onto tape?

Parts I and II of this series [in the April and June 1985 issues of *The Independent*] examined the transfer characteristics of the conventional answer print, low contrast print, master positive, duplicate negative, C.R.I., and original negative, and suggested, not surprisingly, that—for reasons of sharpness and tone scale fidelity—the original negative is the transfer element of choice. However, since the original negative was scissored apart and spliced into A and B rolls in order to strike that answer print, the question becomes how to transfer the A and B rolls?

Historically, the answer has been: Forget it. The direct transfer of A and B rolls has not been an option. Only a single strand of film, i.e., a print or duplicate of the original negative for release printing, has been suitable for transfer. Why? Others have asked the same question, and now there's progress to report. To understand the situation as it stands—and changes in the offing—let's review some of its key elements.

Kodak conceived 16mm in the early 1920s as a home movie medium; no provision was made for invisible splicing. Since the 16mm frameline was too thin to accommodate an overlap, any splice, whether tape or cement, protruded into the adjoining frame. But when World War II propelled 16mm into the professional realm, a practical technique for concealing 16mm splices was perfected that is still widely used today.

The even shots and odd shots of the 16mm original are segregated into two full-length strands: A and B. In each strand, lengths of opaque black leader are cut in where the shots that comprise the other strand are missing. By checkering picture and opaque black leader in this fashion, the splice at either end of a shot can always overlap into a frame of black leader instead of another frame of the picture.

In A and B printing, the first strand, or "A-roll," is threaded on a contact printing machine alongside a role of unexposed print rawstock. There is a sync frame marked at the head of the A-roll (frame = 000 feet, 00 frames), and a corresponding mark made at the beginning of the print rawstock. The two marks are aligned perfectly before any printing occurs. The A-roll is then printed, exposing only the even shots (for purposes of this example). The opaque leader prevents any exposure between the even shots, leaving unexposed "holes" on the rawstock The print rawstock is then rewound to the beginning and its sync mark perfectly aligned with that of the "B-roll." In a second printing pass, the B-roll exposes the complementary odd shots, filling the holes. The resulting print appears splice-free.

In addition to making splices invisible, A and B roll printing also made practical the printing of dissolves from the 16mm original, including fades, which are dissolves between picture and black. The 35mm practice was to remove the required frames, dissolve them in an optical printer at the cost of two generations and a noticeable buildup in contrast and graininess, and cut them back into the original. The time, expense, and quality loss this incurred in 16mm would have discouraged professional interest in the smaller format. Instead, in 16mm A and B roll printing, the two shots to be dissolved, one from each roll, remain in the A and B rolls and are merely cut overlong, with the overlap forming the length of the dissolve. During contact printing, the printing machine's light source is mechanically faded in over the same length as the second shot is incoming. The superimposed result is ideally a smooth dissolve.

Why can't the telecine transfer these A and B rolls one after the other to produce an integrated, finished result like the contact printing machine? Superficially, at least, the telecine looks like a contact printing machine. There are rollers and sprockets clustered on a vertical surface, and the 16mm negative feeds smoothly from a reel on the left to a take-up reel on the right. It can even smell like one. The same technology that renders pristine every print made on a liquid-gate contact printer is now found on telecines (this producer wouldn't think of transferring negative anymore without it), accompanied by that fluid's distinctive odor. But there the resemblance ceases, as far as A and B rolls are concerned.

Consider this scenario: you thread up the A-roll on the telecine and line up its sync frame to a designated time-code point on the 1″ tape used for mastering. Next you record ("lay down") the A-roll. After replacing the A-roll with the B-roll on the telecine and rewinding the 1″ tape to its time-code starting point, you align the B-roll sync frame to that of the 1″ tape. In turn, you lay down the B-roll. Upon playback, to your dismay, you realize that in the process of recording the B-roll, you erased the A-roll.

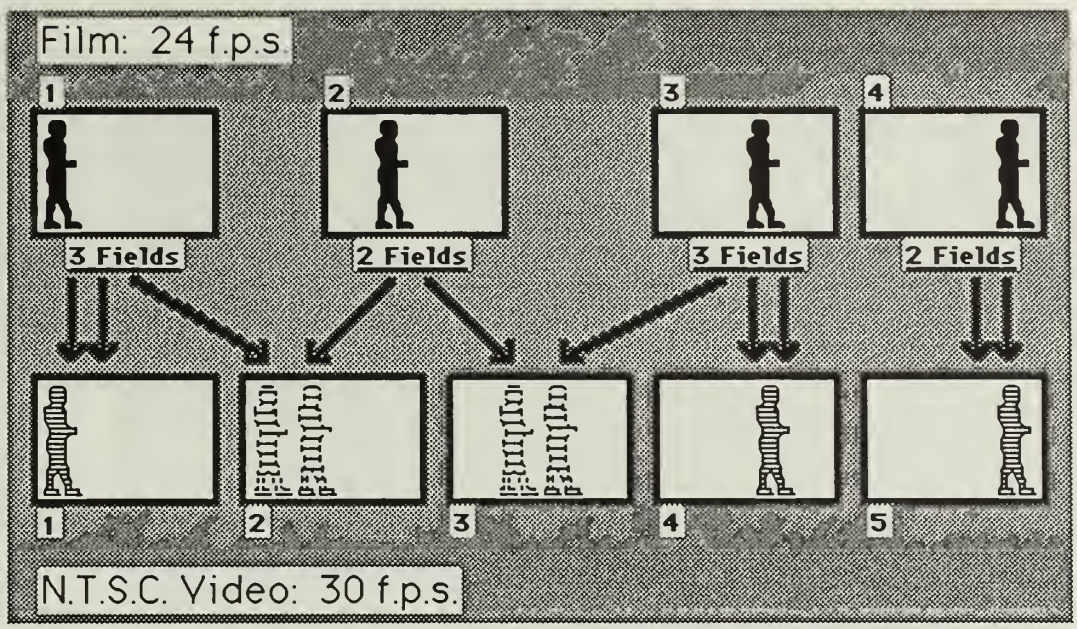
The thought then arises: Why not transfer the A-roll onto one 1″ master tape, the B-roll onto a second, and piece them together during an on-line editing session? You evidently have a deep pocket. For your half-hour production, you've already spent extra time and money color correcting (at real time) two entire reels, the A-roll and the B-roll, instead of the single reel of answer print. Now you wish to spend hundreds of additional dollars on the on-line editing time it would take to painstakingly reassemble the two 1″ masters.

Most producers at this point would stop to reconsider: Is the added quality of negative transferred directly to tape worth this Sisyphean frustration? Are there further hidden costs? All things considered, isn't a transfer from a well-timed answer print or low-contrast print perfectly acceptable? Over the years, producers have concluded that, indeed, attempting to transfer the A and B rolls is not worth it.

There is, in fact, a further rub. Video editing systems can't precisely piece together the separate A-roll and B-roll shots that are transferred from film to tape. If you decide to go ahead with your on-line assemble-edit session, you'll discover that you have to periodically freeze and insert extra frames of video into the master 1″ tape in order to retain picture synchrony to the soundtrack. The reason for this is central to the larger issues of relating film to tape, and tape back to film: different frame rates, and more profoundly, different concepts of what a frame is.

Television was fashioned by futurist radio engineers who owed their formal inspiration more to Marconi than Edison, Eastman, or the brothers Lumiere. While, curiously, these inventors envisioned the primary venue for their radiopictures a Television Theater replete with gigantic projection cathode ray tubes and handsome box office receipts, they ignored 40 years of motion picture precedent. It took that long to arrive at both a dominant gauge, 35mm, and a standard projection speed of 24 frames-per-second. In selecting the N.T.S.C. frame rate of 30 f.p.s., they passed up a singular opportunity to correlate film and video in the U.S. at the most elementary level. (30 f.p.s. was later modified to 29.97 f.p.s. for color broadcasting, but this fact has no bearing on the scope of this discussion.)

To be sure, there were compelling reasons for 30 f.p.s., including the frequency bandwidths set aside for broadcast television, i.e., the desire for 12 VHF channels on the television dial, and a



Frame rate conversion: film to video.
Graphic David Leitner

fear of harmonic interference induced by the U.S. standard hertz (cycles per sec.) A.C. (alternating current) power line frequency. The second problem could be avoided by choosing a framing frequency that was an even multiple of 60 hertz. However, 60 f.p.s. at 525 lines, the targeted number of lines for "high definition," was impossible due to the allotted per channel bandwidth. 30 f.p.s. fit the bill, save for one drawback: screen flicker.

Framing rate requirements for smooth motion and for flickerless viewing are not identical. Film, with a standard screen brightness of about 16 foot-lamberts, needs at least 16 f.p.s. for smooth motion, but at least 48 f.p.s. to suppress the sensation of flickering on the screen. The first condition is easily satisfied by the sound speed of 24 f.p.s., but the second condition is met only by the projector freezing and flashing each frame twice for an effective framing rate of $2 \times 24 = 48$. Film is really "truth" 48 times a second.

Video, with a bright screen of 25 to 100 foot-lamberts for ambient light viewing, also requires at least 48 flashes-per-second for flicker free viewing. But instead of flashing each frame twice, as in film projection, the Frankensteins of broadcast television chose to flash *one half* of each frame twice. Thirty f.p.s., therefore, yields 60 half-frame flashes, or "fields," per second. As the eye is none the wiser, the result is flickerless N.T.S.C. at 30 f.p.s.

Such perceptual trickery is available to video because, in contrast to film, where each frame simultaneously freezes all picture elements into a single slice of time, the video frame progressively fills in a line at a time, from top to bottom. (The image at the top of a video frame doesn't exist in same instant as the image at the bottom.) It's possible, therefore, to record and scan only the even lines of a video frame first, then the odd lines. Although these two-half frames of video, the "lace" and the "interlace," share a frame spatially, they're recorded one after the other, like film frames. In this sense, video fields—rather than frames—are more properly analogous to film frames.

What's this got to do with A and B roll transfers? As it turns out, the only thing that 24 f.p.s. and 30 f.p.s. have in common is that they're divisible by 6. That is, every four frames of film have to generate five frames of N.T.S.C. video in a film-to-tape transfer. How to create an additional frame of video out of thin air?

Modern practice is to transform all the even frames of film into two video half-frames and all the odd frames of film into three video half-frames by repeating one half-frame twice. The telecine can repeat a half-frame because as it scans each film frame, all 525 lines are read into digital memory. As needed, 262½ lines of either the lace or the interlace can be recalled and repeated again. (The arbitrary designations "even" and "odd" are used to facilitate this example. The point is that consecutive film frames alternately contribute three fields, then two, three, then two and so on. This is the sum and substance of the expression "3:2 pulldown," an anachronism since modern flying-spot and solid-state CCD telecines draw film continuously.) Four film frames, then, are transformed into 10 video fields. Since the fields play back consecutively, they "read" as five complete video frames.

The illustration depicts this graphically. Note that the 3:2 distribution of fields is really a pattern of 3:2:3:2. The pattern uniquely repeats every four film frames. Also note the horizontal progress of the walking person: the component fields of video frames #2 and #3 are unnaturally disjoined. Each of these two video frames is an amalgam of adjacent but separate film frames that represent different steps of an incremental action. And, in fact, this is exactly how such frames appear when single-framed on tape (which, incidentally, is why videodisc producers, who tout the single-frame capabilities of the laserdisc, insist on film shot and transferred at 30 f.p.s., like original video). In a sense, then, these mixed-field frames—two out of every five—are "false." They don't relate to any single film frame.

For example, if you transferred film to tape to utilize video editing and made a cut between video frames #2 and #3, how could you relate this video edit to a film frame line for the purposes of negative cutting? You can't. It's a toss of a coin between cutting on either side of film frame #2. That is why film-to-tape-to-film editing systems have to rely on computer memory to insure that the coin lands equally heads and tails within the duration of any edited piece.

Suppose that film frame #1 in the illustration was the last frame of picture shot on the A-roll 1" tape you transferred earlier in this article. Now suppose that film frame #2 is a first frame of black leader. In a burst of hands-on insight, you will realize that the on-line system, designed to edit video *per se,* can only perform cuts at every video frameline—not field. You can either make an edit between video frames #1 and #2, in which case you lose one of the fields recorded from film frame #1, or an edit between video frames #2 and #3, in which case you inherit the blank field in video frame #2 which originated from the first frame of black leader.

But because you transferred negative film and in the process electronically reversed the image to positive, that blank field is not black, but 100 percent white. You can't miss it. For this reason alone, you have no choice but to cut between video frames #1 and #2. It should be evident that every time this occurs, 1/60th of a second of picture is discarded and it won't be long before sync problems with the soundtrack arise. Hence the technique of padding-to-length with spurious video freeze frames.

Ideally, the transfer of A and B rolls should begin and end at the telecine. To accomplish this requires some sort of computerized synchronizer



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to ensure that the telecine always begins the 3:2:3:2 field pattern on the synch frame marked at the head of each A or B roll. This hypothetical synchronizer must also lock the 1" videotape recorder to the telecine on a *field-by-field* basis, so that advancing each frame of film on the telecine advances the VTR alternately two or three fields at time (somewhat like a 16mm-to-35mm tabletop synchronizer). In addition, this synchronizer must control the recording function of the VTR, switching it on when picture is transferred—and *off* when black leader occupies the gate of the telecine.

Such a synchronizer was designed and implemented for the first time on an experimental basis by Du Art Video in New York City in the fall of 1984. The Du Art system is based on the use of a single telecine. As in contact printing, a recording pass for each roll is necessary. Dissolves are accomplished by a technique of simultaneously recording two A-roll 1" tapes instead of one. The first becomes the master into which the B-roll shots will be inserted, and the second a source of playback. Upon transfer of the B-roll, dissolves are made possible by mixing the A-roll signal from a playback VTR with the B-roll signal directly from the flying-spot scanner. This means ineluctably that the A-roll half of any dissolve is second-generation; however, generational losses in 1" Type C are infinitesimal compared to those of smaller video formats or film. The use of A-roll playback also enables film-style scene-to-scene color correction. Prior to transfer, B-roll shots can be color matched to adjacent A-roll shots that have already been "timed" and committed to tape. It's as simple as split-screening the two on a single monitor.

That Du Art Video had to jerryrig a system of its own is indicative of the industry's sleepy response to both the practical problems and the real possibilities of the N.T.S.C./film interface. The original of virtually every 16mm production completed in the last 30 years exists in A and B form, and the A and B roll technique is likely to prevail as long as there is a demand for 16mm answer prints. Surely there is a market for the technology that would directly access these A and B rolls to video. It's taken for granted, for instance, that video cameras gen-lock to one another or that VTRs slave to other VTRs, but, believe it or not, there is not a single device currently on the market that can slave a 1" VTR to a Rank Cintel flying-spot telecine. In essence, a flying-spot telecine is just another video source. What gives? Is this the year 1985, this the industry of the Ampex ADO, the Montage, the EditDroid...?

David W. Leitner is a consultant and independent producer based in New York City. He participated in the development of the Du Art A & B roll transfer system and delivered a paper detailing the effort at the 1984 S.M.P.T.E. Conference in New York.

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Underdeveloped Media Overdeveloped Technology



Courtesy AT&T

Martha Gever

The theme of democratic communications surfaces everywhere in and around alternative video in the U.S. Our television industry, of course, has asserted its claim to populist, democratic entertainment and information—reaching all, reflecting all, responding to the tastes and desires of all—but that pretension has been largely played out. Even though the relationship between mass media, marketplace economies, and corporate priorities is widely acknowledged, a general fascination with the television industry's productions and personalities persists. Even so, *mass* media should not be taken as synonymous with *democratic* media. The distinction was put concisely by Cuban filmmaker Julio Garcia Espinosa: "Mass art is art produced by a minority in order to satisfy the demand of a public reduced to the role of spectator and consumer."[1] Conversely, alternative, democratic media assumes the difficult task of replacing cynical spectators and avid consumers with support for noncommercial, anti-elitist media forms and contents. Contributing to or creating popular art—as opposed to mass art—may not directly motivate all video projects, but decentralized, potentially democratic video enabled by television technologies—portable cheap recorders and cameras; cable TV; satellites; home video equipment—creates a space where art intersects communications and, thus, the politics of communications.

Ironically, the language of democracy remains a constant in the justifications for corporate control of the television industry in this country. For instance, in the recent battle over ownership of CBS, network executives contrasted their contributions to *public service* with Ted Turner's questionable public morality. And in an article published in the January 1985 issue of *Access,* a telecommunications monthly, Federal Communications Commission chair Mark Fowler described how shifts in the agency's policy guarantee the *public interest:*

> What I have urged is that we move toward a marketplace approach to broadcast regulation and away from the "public trusteeship" model which has guided the Commission for most of its first 50 years. This "trusteeship" model was based on the belief that the airwaves are scarce. It is now apparent that they never were. The communications industry just didn't have the technological know-how or the capital to develop the spectrum.
>
> As a result of the Commission's past adherence to the trusteeship approach, government-imposed restrictions have inhibited innovation, technological development, and true competition. Moreover, government officials have determined what the public should hear, contrary to our most fundamental First Amendment principles.
>
> Under the marketplace approach, on the other hand, the Commission looks to competition, not bureaucratic rules, as a way to ensure service. Broadcasters can program based on what the people want rather than based on the raised eyebrows of government employees in Washington. The public's interest defines the public interest.[2]

In these few paragraphs, Fowler summarizes the program of deregulation pursued by the Reagan FCC. Under Fowler, the FCC has successfully codified redefinitions of basic concepts such as freedom of speech and public interest. With the marketplace model now firmly in place, the broadcast industry will be relieved of all nonprofitable functions. Last summer, the Commission eliminated restrictions on the amount of time broadcasters could sell to advertisers, requirements for nonentertainment programs, community ascertainment, and program logging. Next on the deregulators' agenda is an attack on the Fairness Doctrine, the rule allowing responses to controversial material on radio or TV, one of the few vestiges of a public service concept of telecommunications. And last year, in the name of freedom, the FCC increased the ceiling for ownership of radio and TV stations from seven to 12; in 1990 all limitations may be lifted. According to Fowler, this will further "diversity" because "entry into the marketplace is thus facilitated and more players can compete to serve the public's needs." In fact, the new rule will permit a greater concentration of ownership, parallel to that of the giant newspaper chains or the major multiple cable system owners. This analogy becomes explicit with publishing czar Rupert Murdoch's pending purchase of Metromedia's seven television stations.

Leaving aside the questionable veracity of Fowler's assessment of spectrum scarcity and his reconstruction of the past role of government regulation—or the accuracy of his predictions for the flowering of broadcast communications—these remarks encapsulate a plan for the institutionalized consolidation of communications capital under private control. Public interest has been recast as corporate—that is, private—interests. We're witnessing the transformation of public discussions and debates enabled by electronic communications into a "marketplace of ideas"—a phrase favored by exponents of communications deregulation, who deploy concepts of democracy and freedom in order to occupy and command a sector of the public sphere, sanctioned by state authority.

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telecommunications policy is technological progress, technological breakthroughs that will, according to this scheme, enhance democracy. The more likely outcome will be even less public service, less information and more homogenous entertainment over more channels, selling more products, creating more consumers. Given the present political climate, these developments are hardly shocking, nor are the latest FCC measures more than an extension of previous policies and the organization of television in the U.S. as a private business. But this direction in public policymaking must be understood not only as increasing the privatization of information and as a complete shutdown of public access to the most privileged form of mass media, but as an urgent argument for alternatives, i.e., television that operates outside and against the market.

•

There is an implied and necessary link between the work of those who analyze mass media and developments in communications policies and the work of alternative video producers. Rarely, however, are these seen as contributions to the same project. Messing with the TV signal has been proposed as a radical act, and turning a TV set sideways or hanging monitors from the ceiling has been said to encourage critical reexamination of the mass media. But such claims exhibit the same technological fallacy underlying Fowler's argument for government deregulation. Nicholas Garnham has pointed out that when communications technologies are proposed as the agency of democracy, the "object of analysis [is] misrepresented... by focusing on its surface rather than on its underlying structure, and by denying its real history."[3] Likewise, alternative video that proposes subversion via technological innovation ignores the underlying structures and history of mass media. And it is these structures that communications theory attempts to elaborate and critique. Instead of situating alternative video as a formal intervention, strategies informed by rigorous theoretical analyses of mass media allow an understanding of the relationships between alternative and commercial TV, in precise historical terms.

Sadly, communications researchers and theorists who study mass media in the U.S. have not applied their analyses to possible or actual alternatives, while communications politics and policies often get shunted aside or dealt with in a superficial manner by alternative video producers. Thus isolated, both approaches remain impoverished. Integration of critical theory and critical practice can be intimidating, however. Alternative media often seem insignificant when compared to the ubiquitous mass media. And, describing the view from the producer's side of the divide, Armand Mattelart has observed:

> Studies which take apart the mechanisms of power provoke a reaction of terror and an-

nihilation in the face of the advance of this cold-hearted technological monster. The logic of capital is personified, anthropomorphicized, cloaked with invincibility. The distance is too great between the everyday experience that the individual has of systems of power and this exposure of the structures of power. These studies are deciphered from the point of view of a conspiracy victim.[4]

The definition of individuals as consumers, democracy as the freedom to choose between competing products, and progress as proliferating technology are essential pillars of culture sustained by commerce. Industrialized culture demands the continual production of cultural commodities and a climate favorable to cultural consumption. This process, however, is not absolute; it's useful to remember the uneasy alliance required when creative work and creative workers are subjugated to economic imperatives. At the same time, this contradiction alone does not imbue mass media with inherent progressive or radical potential. As Garnham notes in his "Contribution to a Political Economy of Mass Communications," "[T]he ideology of creative freedom can be used by capital to keep their labor force divided and weak and with no control over the strategic moments of the total labor process."[5]

The strategic moments that Garnham refers to are the "means of mass reproduction" and the "means of mass distribution." In order for alternative media to significantly challenge mass media, both mass reproduction and mass distribution must be rethought and, eventually, replaced. What's at stake here is not the availability of new media products made by accomplished artisans or artists, but the social relations that mass media reinforces and, to some extent, produces. Certainly, isolated models for democratic communications will not singlehandedly usher in a new social order. Even so, the central function of media, especially television, as a powerful ideological agent calls for strategies that use television.

A brief review of alternative video experiments can offer a starting point for a critique and evaluation of the possibilities of democratic communications in the U.S. The early days of countercultural video production in the late sixties, when small-format video equipment was first introduced, appeared to presage a movement toward countertelevision. Propagandists for noncommercial video outlined a freewheeling philosophy of television-for-the-people. The rhetoric was heady. For instance, Michael Shamberg, a member of the Raindance video collective and later a principal in the Top Value Television group, called for a "Cybernetic Revolution."[6] The effect of the "guerrilla" tactics promoted by Raindance and other similar collectives was soon undermined by the absence of a political or economic analysis that examined assumptions about material abundance and the causes of social inequity. Those video groups that survived into the eighties have since abandoned their revolutionary pretensions.

A more sustained approach to the problem of democratic communications can be found in the work of community video activists. Concurrent with the emergence of countercultural video, a number of novice videomakers, veteran filmmakers, and community organizers adopted strategies for using public access channels on cable TV to foster grassroots, decentralized, nonprofessional television production. Their plans for community participation, however, did not necessarily lead to a critique of undemocratic social relations. The history of the Alternative Media Center, established in 1971 as a flagship for public access video where a generation of media activists were inspired, trained, and sent into the field, illustrates the faulty equation of decentralization with media democracy. The center now devotes most of its resources to instructing employees of private businesses in the use of computers, teleconferencing, and the like. The report of UNESCO's International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, commonly known as the MacBride Commission, pinpoints the limitations of simple access programs: "[D]ecentralized media have often a tendency to imitate the workings of the centralized system, creating situations of local corporatism or mirroring the social hierarchies predominating in the area."[7]

This doesn't mean that public access channels should not be kept open, or that the some 2,000 access centers at cable TV facilities in the U.S. should not be defended. Indeed, they must, because public access is essential to a democratic restructuring of communications. Nevertheless, access is not enough; community media often rests on a concept of information consumers and engenders what the Council for the Development of Community Media, based in Quebec, has called "participationitis": "By masking class divisions and the resulting contradictions of society, [community television] considers the social formation as a series of distinct social groups, with sometimes divergent interests, but which all participate, each in their own way, to the development of society."[8] Nowhere in this construct of society is media seen as a site for political struggle; the development of society remains contained and managed by existing hierarchies of power and domination.

Another indicator of inadequate models for alternatives to consumer-based communications and the social order these support is the paucity of progressive video activity in the U.S. aligned with the interests of labor. It's not surprising, then, that prominent video artist Nam June Paik, writing for the video art magazine *Send,* hopes for the "de-unionization of the American airwaves."[9] On the other hand, the Labor Institute of Public Affairs, a media arm of the AFL-CIO, depends on mass media idioms and channels to give credibility to images of workers and labor issues. Although this strategy acknowledges the importance of visibility for an embattled group, it replicates mass media productions designed for passive audiences.

Keeping in mind Garcia Espinosa's description of mass art and the public it proposes, alternative, democratic communications must offer a genuine alternative. But the word "alternative" is a slippery one. The MacBride report lists several varieties of alternatives. One is community media; another is the networks of trade unions and other social groups. The most radical alternative the commissioners identify, though, is overtly oppositional: "Starting from the view that institutionalized communications is a mirror of a hierarchical society, counter-information sets out to challenge the influence of dominant information; it also seeks to establish channels which reflect and respond to those subjected to the flow of dominant information."[10] In a society where a deregulated communications industry has been given free reign, this "alternative" comes closest to a concept of democratic communications that encourages critical consciousness and the creation of media that puts critical communications theory into practice.

NOTES

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TRUTH & CONSEQUENCES
PUBLIC AFFAIRS DOCUMENTARIES

Patricia Thomson

Despite now routine reports on the evening news, U.S. citizens still know very little about Central America. Sadly, many journalists assigned to the region are likewise ignorant. The major reason for this situation is that networks have always preferred generalists to specialists, operating on the theory that reporters' involvement in an area may bias their work. Thus, assignments are regularly rotated. This practice results in superficial, second-hand understanding of local or regional issues, compounded by reporters' frequent inability to speak native languages. To the horror of the North American Congress on Latin America, calls come in from network correspondents asking, "I just got back from Poland, and I'm off to cover the Salvadoran elections; can you spare 20 minutes to brief me?"

The survey form used for almost all network foreign affairs documentaries serves the public much as a 20-minute briefing does the globe-hopping journalist. It skims a broad surface. For audiences starting from scratch a telescopic distance is a reasonable perspective, but audiences are offered little else. And for the networks, the survey is a matter of expediency, satisfying television's obligation to cover "issues of public importance" in the least amount of time, with the least possible expense, creating the least controversy.

The penchant for using a broad brush in foreign affairs documentaries can also be linked to the requirements of the Fairness Doctrine. Echoing the language of the Communications Act of 1934, this Federal Communications Commission rule requires that station licensees "operate in the public interest." It specifies that, in order to do so, they must devote a reasonable amount of time to the coverage of controversial issues of public importance, and do so fairly by affording a reasonable opportunity for contrasting viewpoints on these issues. The rule was first drafted by the FCC in 1949 to curb the practices of station owners like George A. Richards, Powell Crosby, and William Randolph Hearst, who used their radio outlets to distort, suppress, and generally manipulate the news to serve private interests and promote personal values and candidates for public office. The balanced presentation of opposing viewpoints advocated by the Fairness Doctrine pertains to "overall programming." Nowhere does the Fairness Doctrine state that each program must contain conflicting views. Documentaries without a point-counterpoint structure are permissible. If the views expressed in one documentary are not balanced by those aired in another, reply time on the *Today Show, Nightline, 60 Minutes*'s letter segment, and the like would generally suffice.



In a scene from the PBS series "Crisis in Central America," a smiling Somoza casts a vote for himself in the 1967 Nicaraguan presidential election.
Courtesy Frontline

But most network documentaries remain self-contained, abutting statement with counter-statement (what's called "fairness filler"), in a stopwatch balancing act. Not to do so could be costly. Possible scenarios for fairness disputes include a fairness complaint filed with the FCC, followed by a ruling that the station offer reply time (if a sponsor for the reply cannot be found, the station bears the cost); a prolonged court battle; or the withdrawal of advertising by an offended company (Coca-Cola's response to NBC's *Migrant* expose of the company's exploitation of Florida citrus workers, for example).

The specter of fairness complaints and possible financial losses has led networks to shy away from controversy in their public affairs programming. This is the irony of Fairness Doctrine history, originally intended to *encourage* stations to address "controversial issues of public importance." The network's response has been to squeeze the entire coverage of an issue into a single program, and such condensation becomes even more exaggerated in foreign news documentaries, because they are already allocated only a meager slice of network time.

Another major factor determining the content of television journalism is outlined in Edward Jay Epstein's now classic *News from Nowhere*. The popular "mirror metaphor" for television news is misapplied, Epstein shows, since mirrors do not make decisions about what to reflect and how; news organizations do. These decisions are based on economic logic, practical newsgathering considerations, and the criteria of the assignment desk, such as newsworthiness, predictability, film value, geographic balance, time considerations, and correspondents' preferences. The news *story*, as in *drama*, also plays a part. Reuven Frank, former president of NBC News, saw this as the road to better ratings: "You cannot interest people unless you tell stories. Usually in a good story, there's a protagonist, a conflict, and a resolution." The upshot has been that stories tend to harden into formulas, and news consists of a "repertory of stereotypes," as Walter Lippman observed. Epstein quotes Sander Vanocur, an NBC correspondent, who elaborates: "Network news is a continuous loop: there are only a limited number of plots—'Black versus White,' 'War is Hell,' 'America is falling apart,' 'Man against the the elements,' 'The Generation Gap,' etc.—which we seem to be constantly redoing with a different cast of characters." The stereotypes in foreign news, especially Third World coverage, tend to conform to what the editors of NACLA's *Report on the Americas* identify as a "simple 'Three-C's formula'—Coups, Catastrophes, and Communism." Keep in mind that network documentaries are the product of news departments, which only rarely veer from this formula.

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The blandness of network news and public affairs documentaries is thus largely self-inflicted.

Nevertheless, within the relatively small audiences such shows attract, a select group of opinion leaders, policy makers, and other public movers and shakers can be found. Whatever the limitations of television conventions, the result is a number of television documentaries which have affected opinion and law.

- *See It Now: The Case against Milo Radulovich, AO589839* (1953): Radulovich, a model Air Force officer, was considered a security risk for maintaining ties with his father and sister, suspected of Communist associations. After Edward R. Murrow's expose on CBS, Air Force Secretary Harold E. Talbot overruled the board of colonels who had recommended Radulovich's dismissal.

- *See It Now: Senator Joseph McCarthy* and McCarthy's reply (1955): This was television's first direct refutation of McCarthy's "facts" and challenge to his tactics. CBS received well over 75,000 letters, 10 to one in favor of the broadcast. The show was perceived as an act of courage, helping to break the prevailing climate of fear and paranoia, and set the stage for the subsequent Army-McCarthy hearings, televised in full.

- *Chemical and Biological Warfare: The Secrets of Secrecy* (1969): An investigation of the death of thousands of sheep in Utah and the Department of Defense's Dugway Proving Ground, located nearby. After seeing this documentary, Congressman Richard D. McCarthy instigated congressional hearings that ultimately resulted in President Nixon's decision to end biological warfare experiments.

- *CBS Reports: Hunger in America* (1970): The Department of Agriculture was accused of undermining its own food-for-the-poor programs and holding back its emergency powers. A congressional committee subsequently investigated the matter, and Congress voted an additional $200-million for food programs.

- *60 Minutes: The Daisy Chain* (1974): This expose of illegal profits made by U.S. oil companies and the inaction of state and federal watchdog agencies resulted in prosecution by the Justice Department, several civil suits against companies and individuals, and FBI investigations of white collar crime.

This list of consequences, both great and small, could be generously expanded. And it reminds us that a single television documentary can be a powerful catalyst in changing popular opinion and public policy. But, as the list grows, a disturbing pattern emerges: the news and public affairs programs that managed to influence the course of events have been almost entirely limited to issues, policies, and practices within our national borders. The actions of the U.S. government and businesses in the international arena, on the other hand, have enjoyed relative immunity from media-generated pressure.

Why is this so? Is this due to the boundaries of legislative authority—because local, state, and the federal government have the means to enact local, state, and national laws, but no international jurisdiction? Hardly. That argument rests on a too modest view of the U.S. government's *de facto* power. And, just as Congress can allocate millions for government food programs, it can pass a bill restricting the number of military advisors in El Salvador. Perhaps the public simply isn't interested. It's well known that international affairs rank low in news watchers' interests—lower than national news, lower again than local news. But, as demonstrated in the case of Congressman McCarthy and *Chemical and Biological Warfare,* a single adamant person in a position of power can spark an effective response.

Instead of these hypotheses, we might ask why foreign affairs documentaries are most often treated as general surveys, without the kind of investigative reporting applied to domestic matters? Also, how are topics selected? Why, for instance, are U.S. national security, drug traffic, and oil prices and supplies high priority while the activities of transnational corporations are not? The discrepancy between the treatment of national and international subjects and the notable absence of certain concerns from the network roster is not coincidental, but can be traced to economic, political, and legal constraints on network news departments.* Here, pressures that shape the contents and forms of what's popularly accepted as objective information can be discerned. There are, however, television documentaries that break with the network norms. Most often, these are tucked away in off-hours on PBS, not made specifically for broadcast—and independently produced. An examination of several recent network documentaries and parallel independent productions on a common theme—Central America and the Caribbean —provides a case study of the principles and priorities governing the presentation of international news in our country.

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According to sociologist Herbert J. Gans in *Deciding What's News,* "American foreign news is ultimately only a variation on domestic themes." Emphasis goes to "American activities in a foreign country," generally revolving around the visits of U.S. presidents, secretaries of state, diplomats, and troops. Interestingly, "corporate officials involved in foreign trade" are not principle players in this area, and rank alongside endangered tourists and famous entertainers. The second ranking category, "foreign activities that affect Americans and American policy," encompasses the activities of all Communist bloc countries. When U.S. citizens are not directly involved in or affected by a news event, stories either relay U.S. practices and values, such as elections, or concentrate on the violations of these values. Gans also notes that the U.S. news media "tend to follow American foreign policy, even if not slavishly, but they hew closer to the State Deparment line on foreign news than to the White House line on domestic news."

The U.S. press's reliance on "official sources" has lessened since the Vietnam War, but only somewhat. What has and has not changed in this regard was considered by University of California professor Dan Hallin in his excellent study, "The Media Go to War: From Vietnam to Central America," prepared for NACLA's *Report on the Americas.* One significant change has been in the use of more disparate sources, official or otherwise. Hallin acknowledges that "objective" journalism is still essentially "establishment" journalism, then goes on to point out,



"Frontline" claims Central America is in crisis, but the image of Miami-bound Marielitos raises the question: Whose crisis is it, Cuba's or our own?
Courtesy Frontline

> . . .today, the political establishment is deeply divided over foreign policy. And in an atmosphere of political division, the routines of "objective journalism" take on a different meaning. The official sources journalists rely on are now telling them very different things, and journalists feel an obligation to take an independent stance in relation to administration policy they never would have considered in the days when foreign policy was considered "above politics."

What is more, the enemy is allowed to speak. Opposition leaders are interviewed, and their news media, such as Radio Venceremos in El Salvador, are used as sources. Unlike the Vietnam years, the administration's opponents are not always portrayed as an undifferentiated mass. Finally, there is increased scepticism about information issued by the government. More often, U.S. propaganda is labeled as such, and the Cold War "domino theory" is called just that—a theory, not a fact.

Because of the Reagan administration's aptitude for precise "news management," there is a pronounced atmosphere of heightened vigilance among journalists, evidenced in articles like Anthony Mann's in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, "When the Government Tells Lies: A veteran journalist surveys the scope of the problem—and suggests ways reporters can cope with it." Nevertheless, a straightforward repetition of official assertions and accusations prevails on the nightly 22-minute presentations of headline news. (Remember how print and television journalism reporting on the invasion of Grenada echoed official U.S. policy—a phenomenon neither fully explained or excused by the initial press censorship.) Television documentaries, too, remain tightly tethered to the government line.

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Filmmaker Peter Schnall indirectly suggested the violence of labor struggle through graphics from the union's anti-Coke campaign, reproduced here by a Scandinavian joumal.
Courtesy filmmaker

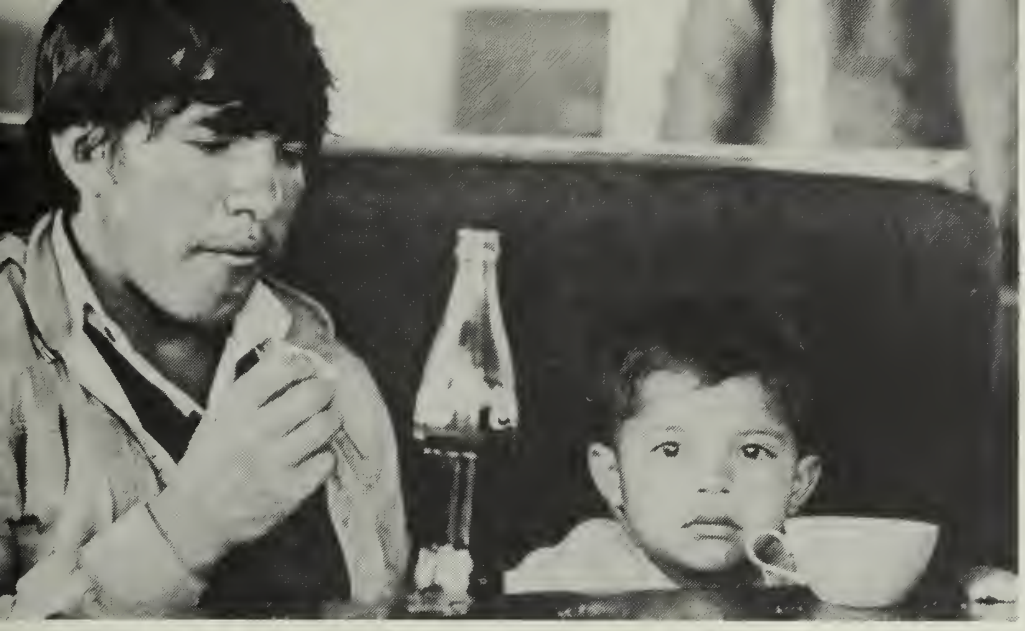
Above right: The pause that refreshes: "The Real Thing" depicts the daily routine of Guatemalan workers and their families occupying Coke's bottling plant. Below right: Coca-Cola claimed their Guatemala City plant was bankrupt; workers insist the closing was a cover for union busting.
Courtesy filmmaker

During the 1984–85 season, national prime-time television's major contribution to the coverage of Central America was the four-part PBS program *Crisis in Central America,* broadcast on the *Frontline* series in April 1985. In *American Film,* executive producer Austin Hoyt (whose credits include the PBS *Vietnam: A Television History* series), defined the program's supposed neutral stance: "The leftist filmmakers think America is the problem in Central America; the Right thinks America is the answer. We are not looking through either lens. Our interest is in understanding, not indicting, and trying to rise above ideological battles." Accordingly, the series includes substantial interviews with Marxists and Communists, including such principle figures as Tomas Borge, a founder of Nicaragua's FSLN, and Jose Manuel Fortuny, secretary general of the Guatemalan Communist Party. In its individual segments—on Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and a historical survey of "The Yankee Years"—*Crisis in Central America* provides background information absent from the nightly news. In so doing, *Crisis in Central America* countered impressions of the region as a birthplace for incomprehensible, chronic, fanatic, indigenous violence.

Still, the overall structure of the series and, even more, its wraparound commentary by Judy Woodruff pitch the series distinctly to the right. Despite Hoyt's contentions, *Crisis in Central America* plants itself squarely in the middle of the battlefield *as the U.S. government sees it.* After all, Cuba, Nicaragua, and El Salvador are not the only countries in the region; however, they do cause Washington the biggest headaches. *Crisis in Central America* is in many respects a domestic news story. It repeatedly returns to U.S. involvement, U.S. officials, U.S. fears, U.S. values, and the Reagan administration's interpretations of events. Woodruff's introduction, peppered with buzzwords like "explosive," "revolution," "battlefield," and "challenged the United States" segues into a clip of President Reagan (without fairness filler): "The national security of all the Americas is at stake in Central America." Reagan's policy is described by Woodruff as being "under siege" and even "held hostage."

Compare this with *CBS Reports*'s opening to its 90-minute survey *Central America in Revolt:* "The domino theory is back in the news," says Dan Rather at the top of the program, broadcast at the time of the 1982 elections in El Salvador and Guatemala. Similarly, Bill Moyer's opening to the El Salvador segment of the program carefully maintains a critical distance: "It's a civil war. But we're told the Soviet Union is working through Nicaragua and Cuba to help the insurgents win a victory for Communism. We're told our own security is at stake here."

The press's independence from official sources is a topic for discussion in Rather's interview with





U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, who has been sharply critical of the press's "predisposition to disbelief"—the "Vietnam Syndrome." Rather counters, "Yet it is precisely the government's credibility—with the public, press, and the Congress—that has been so strained." He mentions the cases of the official White Paper on El Salvador, later acknowledged as "misleading" by the State Department; a falsely identified photograph used by Secretary of State Haig to support administration policy; and a press conference featuring a Nicaraguan captured in El Salvador, who later admitted that the U.S. government had used "psychological coercion" to elicit certain statements about El Salvador.

At the same time, Third World spokespeople provide more than fairness filler. The final segment features lengthy interviews with Mexican president Jose Lopez Portillo and novelist/diplomat Carlos Fuentes. The conclusions, in effect, are theirs. Prior to that, the program casts its net for sources wider than the norm. For correspondent Ed Rabel's segment on Guatemala, independents Tom Siegel and Pam Yates obtained interviews with "unofficial" sources, including a peasant organizer and a founder of the country's largest peasant labor organization.

Central America in Revolt lacks the hubris of so many documentaries, which boast comprehensiveness when they are merely superficial, implying "truth" is a tightrope between two opposing views in a world of multiple perspectives. Even Moyers openly chafes at the limitations of his format:

> That's the frustrating thing about reporting this story. There is much of it we cannot show you. We cannot show you the Spanish invaders making slaves of the Indians to begin an era of brutal rule. We cannot show you the big coffee growers of a hundred years ago taking the land on which the peasants grew food. And we cannot show you that crucial, bloody year of 1932, when the peasants rose up and were slaughtered, thousands and thousands of them, by the dictator who served the ruling class.

With the introduction of class oppression and economic imperialism as legitimate considerations, *Central America in Revolt* indicates the extent of national television's critical assessment of U.S. foreign policy. But despite the program's boldness, like *Crisis in Central America,* it is still bound to this policy insofar as it replicates the map of U.S. national security concerns. Furthermore, although both documentary projects escape easy cliches of "coups, catastrophes, and Communism," they end up recycling the principle themes of Third World news: violence and terror, human rights, and censorship.

This is not to say it is wrong for television to deal with such themes. Rather, a wider perspective—one that goes beyond the government's agenda and deeper than the news department's survey format—is needed to inform the public fully and fairly of U.S. relations with our southern neighbors.

One occasionally finds such programs coming out of the network's local affiliates. More often, they are independent productions appearing on PBS, either as stand-alones, or in quasi-national or local series, such as KCET's *Presente* and WNET's *Independent Focus*. Rarely do they reach prime-time, and rarely are they promoted by the stations. Two independent documentary productions, *The Real Thing* and *Manos a la Obra*, are typical with respect to scheduling and promotion. In terms of their subjects and treatments, they are not. They prove that the exceptions to television's unwritten rules can be as credible, as effective, and less prone to stereotypes or formulas than their prime-time counterparts.

According to network logic, audiences require good stories and good stories require "good pictures," usually a euphemism for dramatic images. Comparing their respective coverage of a local fire, two news editors argue: "Our flames are higher," says one; "But our nun is crying harder," responds the other. Peter Schnall's *The Real Thing* belies this logic. It is a story about a *systemic* problem—the bane of television journalism—in which the main action is one of waiting. And it has very good pictures.

The Real Thing examines the lack of accountability of transnational corporations—specifically Coca-Cola's closing of its bottling plant in Guatemala City in 1984. According to the parent company, the plant was bankrupt. According to the International Union of Food and Allied Workers and the plant workers who saw the management's double set of books, the plant was solvent and its closing was a cover for union busting. The film's "action" is the peaceful occupation of the plant by 460 employees, in other





Left: Puerto Rican children salute the U.S. flag, but they are unlikely to find jobs in the U.S.-engineered industrial boom-gone-bust. Right: "Manos a la Obra" contrasts the island paradise of commercial jingles to the realities of Puerto Rican underemployment.
Courtesy filmmakers



Through its ironic treatment, "Manos a la Obra" makes clear the glittering pleasures of Puerto Rico are for turistas only.
Courtesy filmmakers

words, the attentuated, uneventful process of holding out. Not much to shoot, other than the arrival of food or visiting relatives, the dispensing of toilet paper, the maintenance of idle equipment, the baseball playoff between the sales department and warehouse workers, and the nightwatch for vandals.

But in this story symbols are important. As Marta Torres, a union lawyer, explains, "Coca-Cola has been for us in Guatemala a symbol of oppression, of exploitation of the Guatemalan workers, of disrespect for human rights, for human dignity." Schnall's cinematography seizes this point. A close-up of the glass shards of broken Coke bottles cemented into the plant's enclosing fence fills the film's opening frames. Throughout, empty Coke bottles are a pervasive and potent presence. They tower in stacks behind a priest giving a service. They glisten in the firelight as the occupiers listen for trouble. They accompany lunch.

As the film relates, the history of Coca-Cola in Guatemala has been a chronicle of conflict between the franchise owners and the union, periodically erupting into bloodshed. In the late seventies, eight union leaders were methodically murdered. At that point, the IUF (the film's sponsor) became involved. Schnall incorporates the graphics produced during the IUF's protest campaign, panning over powerful images of the Coca-Cola logo dripping blood or shackling the wrists of the workers. These negative ads, plus one instance of archival footage showing an assassinated union leader, refer to the violence of Guatemala's labor struggle, but violent footage is downplayed. Instead, there is the threat of violence, constant and invisible, and labor, not violence, is the subject of *The Real Thing.*

Union busting doesn't fit into the categories regularly covered on television, let alone those associated with Central America. But the relations of U.S.-based transnational corporations such as Coca-Cola to local labor forces constitutes a critical component of world economics. *The Real Thing* presents a microcosm of those relations, where workers' mundane actions become courageous acts, and the human toll of Coca-Cola's Olympian remove becomes plain. The close-range view of *The Real Thing* allows this, whereas a telescopic survey could only reduce the situation to anecdote.

Another drawback of documentary surveys is their tendency to distort geography. For example, one might easily conclude from network documentaries, or from the nightly news, that Cuba is the only country in the Caribbean. Only ads enticing tourists and businesses to other islands provide a reminder that they exist. Or when a newsworthy event turns U.S. heads, as in 1977 when some Puerto Rican nationalists carried out bombings in the U.S. This brought public notice, plus a crew from *60 Minutes.* Their segment on Puerto Rico is one of the few prime-time documentaries about the island since the 1957 *See It Now* program on Puerto Rican immigration. It depicts the commonwealth as a "welfare island"—where the annual income is one third lower than the poorest state, Mississippi, where people choose welfare and food stamps over low wages, and where dependence on imports for food staples is the fault of a nebulous "odd economics." The central question this program poses is: At a subsidy of $3-billion per year from Washington, can't U.S. taxpayers get Puerto Rico off their hands? If not, why not?

Manos a la Obra: Operation Bootstrap, by Pedro Rivera and Susan Zeig, looks at the rise and fall of Puerto Rico's economic boom in the 1950s and sixties, so nostalgically invoked by *60 Minutes.* But its vantage point is from the other side of the waters, and its view of the boom—dubbed Operation Bootstrap—is decidedly less rosy. The question here is: How did the people of Puerto Rico accept private investment and a continuation of economic ties with the U.S. as the sure path to future prosperity?

The filmmakers trace a complex history through interviews and archival material. Their story begins in the decades after the U.S. occupation of the island in 1898, when investors planted the coastal plains with sugar cane, leaving Puerto Rico with a one-crop system and its natural by-product: a seasonally employed workforce and a malnourished population. A rising wave of resistance to the sugar monopolies followed: agrarian reforms, profit-sharing mills, and government-owned industries. Partly in response to the perceived socialist direction of these reforms, after World War II the U.S. decided to undertake a rapid industrialization of the island, accomplished by private enterprise. Puerto Rico was then transformed into "The Showcase of the Americas" through a plan called Operation Bootstrap by U.S. officials—"Manos a la Obra" (Put Your Hands to Work) to Puerto Ricans. Eventually, though, labor intensive industries began to withdraw as tax breaks ran out and cheaper labor was found elsewhere. The Bootstrap planners promptly changed strategy: petrochemical manufacturers, requiring permanent machinery which could not be moved as easily, became the answer. In stepped Phillips Petroleum *et al.* Phillips, for example, promised 33,000 jobs in direct employment and 100,000 indirect jobs to the town of Guayana, which let them in. In return for less land for agriculture, pollutants, and industrial diseases, Guayana now houses an outfit employing only 300 workers and only 100 from Guayana.

Networks would never see much a of a news hook in the special problems created by agribusiness and heavy industry for local populations in developing countries. There is not a pivotal crisis in the entire film, nor does it fulfill Reuven Frank's requirements for "a protagonist, a conflict, and a resolution." The history and economics of Puerto Rico do not fit into easy formulas, unless put in terms of welfare monger or island paradise stereotypes. Much of the film, in fact, subverts these stereotypes. Like *The Real Thing, Manos a la Obra* incorporates the advertising used to push the product's positive image—never a popular ploy in commercial television. (Not surprisingly, neither film was produced for this advertising dependent industry.) In this case, the product is Puerto Rico, for business or pleasure, and the glistening image of the island plays an ironic role. Irony also pervades the film's music, from the pop tune about Juan the construction worker, excluded from the resorts he built, to the musical exchange between an underemployed worker plagued by high prices and an unsympathetic critic who sees him as a lazy bum heading for the the dole—a song which effectively parodies the *60 Minutes* image of Puerto Ricans. But facile images of the island and its people are not the only thing challenged in *Manos a la Obra.* By showing exactly who did and did not prosper as a result of Operation Bootstrap, the film questions the precept that industrial development is the key to the health and prosperity of developing countries.

It usually takes a major crisis for an international issue to reach the approved list of documentary topics at a network news department. During such crises, the shocked U.S. population realizes the extent of their ignorance about world affairs. If there is one television form suited to explore conditions in the world *before* they reach a crisis, it is the documentary. Networks' hesitance reveals serious shortcomings. Public television compensates, but only moderately; it could do much more. While independent productions like *Manos a la Obra* and *The Real Thing* may never alter the habits or rules of network TV, such alternatives might help keep the public more aware—of world affairs and of the limitations of our primary sources of information.

*For detailed discussions of the structures and operations of news departments within the television industry in the U.S., see, for example: Erik Barnouw, *The Image Empire: A History of Broadcasting in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Edward Jay Epstein, *News from Nowhere* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973) and *Between Fact and Fiction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975); Fred W. Friendly, *The Good Guys, the Bad Buys and the First Amendment* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977); Charles Montgomery Hammond Jr., *The Image Decade: Television Documentary 1965-1975* (New York: Hastings House, 1981); William C. Adams, ed., *Television Coverage of International Affairs* (Norwood, N.J.: Ablex Publishing Corp., 1982); and Michael J. Arlen, *Living-Room War* (New York: Viking Press, 1969).

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MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Ernest Larsen

Transmission
edited by Peter D'Agostino
New York: Tanam Press, 1985, 326 pp., $15.95 (paper)

The hot red cover of the new anthology *Transmission* is branded "Theory and Practice for a New Television Aesthetics." Editor Peter D'Agostino's preface unblushingly invokes the name of Walter Benjamin, pinning him to an "age of electronic transmission." While many of us look good in red, the task D'Agostino sets himself is much more exacting than costume-fitting, particularly in an electronic age that babbles about revolutionary advances (in commodities, of course) every chance it gets.

His approach is unusual, given television's status as the most thoroughly pervasive form of representation yet subjected to capitalist exploitation. This "source book of new television theory and practice " deliberately ignores commercial television almost entirely; D'Agostino proposes to compensate by narrowing the focus. His stated criteria for selection are that the essays "challenge accepted beliefs about television... or identify positive models" for its future. Almost any notion of change is better than the status quo, but D'Agostino's vagueness is troubling. His terminology derives from a pop psychology even the most overburdened social worker would reject as dubious, if not debased. To ignore the present state of television and television reception risks the charge of wishful thinking. Fortunately, you can't hang an anthology for its introduction. I can shrug off the paradox of being told that what everybody watches on TV isn't necessarily TV if D'Agostino is prepared to deliver something else.

He comes closest in the section labeled "Practice." (The other sections are "Theory" and "Distribution.") Identified as positive models (grates, doesn't it?) are Ernie Kovacs, Nam June Paik, Samuel Beckett, Peter Watkins, Erik Barnouw's compilation documentary film *Hiroshima-Nagasaki August 1945,* TVTV, *Paper Tiger Television,* and a Bill Moyers snoozer interview with poet and professional gasbag Robert Bly. If you were editing a TV anthology, would you give Bly 24 pages of text and Kovacs two? Wouldn't any editor reasonably committed to an exploration of television's potential have been certain to reverse those figures? Take Bly seriously as a poet and pundit if you dare, but giving this interview more space than any other piece in the book is about as relevant to television as Bly's dulcimer is to hiphop. Ernie Kovacs was the most innovative artist who ever swam the airwaves, and yet I've read footnotes longer than Robert Rosen's "article."

The choice of Nam June Paik seems OK if predictable.* More questionable is the choice of David Ross's article on Paik reprinted from the Whitney Museum of American Art's 1982 retrospective catalogue. Though intelligent and informative, the essay valorizes Paik's contradictory relationship to technology rather than subjecting it to the critical examination it begs for. Ross's hosannahs may be appropriate to their original site, but D'Agostino errs by not seeking out a critic instead of a curator. This is an error he replicates elsewhere in the book. John Hanhardt, curator of film and video at the Whitney, exercises in the "Theory" section, and Barbara London, video curator at the Museum of Modern Art, gets a chance to reanimate her "Brief History and Selected Chronology," another reprinted text written for a show that received a well-administered drubbing in *Afterimage* two years ago. Giving curators space in a critical anothology extends their monopoly on the arena. Curators desperately need criticism—they don't need more advertising pages than they already get in their own publications. Despite the triple whammy we get here, I am resisting the possibility that such obeisance is a necessary propitiation to the gods of the museums. Let us mournfully return to the models in the hope that they are not smiling vacantly like Brooke Shields.

How, you may wonder, did Beckett worm his way into a television anthology? Apparently the old rascal wrote a short teleplay in 1979 which Peter Gidal gives a "materialist" interpretation—a materialism denuded of politics. Along the way, Gidal also attempts to strip Brecht's use of distancing of its socially-rooted meaning. These moves end up leaving his painstaking piece rather naked. But, you may still ask, how did Beckett crash the gate? Even the most impassioned champion of Beckett's work would tell you that when it comes to modeling he's poison. There are tons of pseudo-Beckett mouldering in the literary dump. The inclusion of Gidal's article seems not so much designed to point the way forward but to welcome a high priest of modernism to the tube—in other words, to show that high culture and TV are compatible. It does not begin to explain why if such marriages are so successful there have been so few of them.

Only in the case of *Paper Tiger Television* does D'Agostino discover an authentic model. *Paper Tiger* is an original idea-at-work, still in process, both aesthetically and politically.

The intervention that D'Agostino apparently aimed for is unfortunately pretty much absent in the anthology's "Theory" and "Distribution" sections. Of the nine so-called theory pieces (all apparently written by men) eight have previously been published in book form. This completely belies *Transmission*'s pretense of newness. The only conceivable point of publishing such work is to save the editor the effort of commissioning theoretical articles. Compounding the problem is the fact that most of these pieces are only minimally theoretical. Two are informational. Vincent Mosco's valuable report, "What Is Videotex?" demonstrates in chilling detail that "corporations whose primary interest is profit are relied on to set national policy on the production and distribution of information resources." A report on interactive television in Reading, Pennsylvania is so listless that interaction begins to seem like just another form of reinforced community passivity, reminiscent of the original version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers.* Other pieces suffer from academic good manners. Only in Todd Gitlin's overfamiliar "The Whole World Is Watching" is a voice raised high enough to wake you up. Given a lack of strong arguments passionately upheld, and a fairly consistent avoidance of anything actually seen on TV, each article manages to sustain a conclusion (hedged with due reservations) on the order of "most cats do indeed have tails." Several theorists bouncily suggest that what TV really needs most is a strong dose of video art. Surely, they must be aware that most of the formal achievements of video art constantly appear on TV in those 30-second and 60-second acts of collective genius known as commercials.

Innocently suggesting that TV needs more art is similar to suggesting that more people ought to be fed. Both are distributive problems—on vastly different scales—of no interest to our economic system. The problem of video distribution should, one would think, receive discussion in a section called "Distribution," right? Wrong. In contrast to the all-male theory team, the labor here is all female. In the television mansion, distribution is analogous to the kitchen. Men do the thinking, women do the arranging, is that it? Of the five articles, none actually concerns distribution as such. They describe exhibition sites that facilitate production for video artists, the British Channel Four, and the experimental TV labs at WNET, WGBH, and KQED. Since two of these programs are no longer breathing, D'Agostino would have been far better off securing critical surveys of the TV labs, their histories, their social functions, and their subsequent absorption into regional media centers, many of which are also suffering financially. Instead, we get two- to five-page advocacy pieces. The volume's editorial laziness slides



Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen's video feature "The Bad Sister" appeared on Channel Four, described by Kathleen Hulser in the "Distribution" section of D'Agostino's anthology.



In "Transmission," Robert Rosen makes a case for Ernie Kovacs as the first video artist.

right into lethargy here. Ignored or, to be accurate, censored by omission are the critical consequences of video artists' dependence on institutional support—whether public TV, media centers, museums, or other public and private funding agencies.

Quite simply, this book's strategy of shutting the door in the face of commercial TV—that beery loudmouthed freeloader—doesn't work. Not because it couldn't work, but because so little apparent effort went into its editing. The technical editing alone is disastrously ragged. For instance, a level of mischief is added to an article purporting to examine the difference between popular art and high art because of sloppy proofreading. The headings of a schematic list of these differences are reversed in the text—a mishap which completely skews the meaning, of course. For the credulous reader, high and low suddenly switch identities like the prince and the pauper. The text as a whole is so riddled with errors that I'd have trusted Mr. Ed to do a better proofing job.

Although his intentions remain unfulfilled, D'Agostino's partisanship of anti-commercial TV is well-taken. In the "Practice" section he correctly shoves aside the sit-coms, the soaps, and the quiz shows. Why give the pigs more mud? But the "Theory" section utterly fails to provide the conceptual garden his eight models need to flourish. It's as if he didn't quite grasp that there really is a connection between theory and practice.

There is pressing need, particularly in colleges, for a good new TV/video anthology. While this one adheres consistently to an anticorporate politics, inveighing against "television's prepackaged ideology," it does not live up to the promise of its design. But, that bright-red, severely handsome cover is so striking that if you saw it in a bookstore, you'd immediately pick up the book. And then you'd open it....

*Paik has now been so often referred to as the George Washington of Video (at least twice in this book) that it seems to me incumbent on him to change his name to George Washington. Just think how much witlessness he'd avert with this patriotic gesture.

Ernest Larsen is a fiction writer whose novel Not a Through Street was recently reprinted by Pluto Press.

© Ernest Larsen 1985

LET'S GET PHYSICAL

Scott MacDonald

Figures of Motion: Len Lye/Selected Writings
edited by Wystan Curnow and Robert Horrocks
Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press/Oxford University Press, 1984, 152 pp., $16.00

For years I've been looking forward to learning more about Len Lye, the New Zealand-born filmmaker, kinetic sculptor, and painter whose experiments in direct animation have often made me sensually giddy. Lye's films aren't screened or written about all that much. Over the years his work has attracted some regular notice, and surveys of independent film usually discuss him briefly. But until Wystan Curnow and Robert Horrocks compiled *Figures of Motion* only the sketchiest information about Lye's contribution was generally available. Curnow and Horrocks not only recognized this need, they were sensible enough to know that the most crucial information would be Lye's own comments on his life and work. The editors' brief, conventional introduction prepares the readers for the volume's organization. In the short "Beginnings" section, Lye reminisces about growing up in New Zealand; the emphasis is on particular events which helped his development as a visual artist. Three sections of writings follow: the essays on filmmaking, a second group on Lye's painting and sculpture, and a selection of Lye's experimental writing. A filmography, a listing of gallery and museum shows, and a bibliography of writings by and about Lye are also included.

In general, the volume feels a bit thin: it could do with a good deal more background and context, with some editorial annotation of the essays included, and an index would be helpful. "A Definition of Common Purpose," the political polemic Lye wrote at some point in the late thirties, is missing, and the editors don't even indicate where to find this piece. But there's no point looking a gifthorse in the mouth. The book certainly sheds new light on the various areas of Lye's career.

As a filmmaker, Lye is best known for his exploration of two ways to avoid the camera and work directly on the surface of film. During the late thirties he made a series of remarkable animations using mostly abstract imagery, painted and stenciled directly onto clear celluloid in complex synchronization with popular dance band jazz: *Colour Box* (1935), *Kaleidoscope* (1935), *Trade Tattoo* (1937), *Full Fathom Five* (1937), *Colour Flight* (1938), *Swinging the Lambeth Walk* (1939), and *Musical Poster #1* (1940). Years later he made a series of scratch films: *Free Radicals* (1958, revised 1979), *Particles in Space* (1979), and *Tal Farlow* (completed by Steve Jones after Lye's death, in 1980).

In *Abstract Film and Beyond* Malcolm Le Grice discusses two Italian brothers—Arnaldo

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Len Lye at work on one of his abstract animations, created without benefit of camera.
Courtesy, Cecile Starr

Ginna and Bruno Corra—who apparently did a number of now lost films as early as 1916 using the direct application of color to celluloid, but Lye's painted films may be the earliest effective exploitations of this method we have access to. Along with Harry Smith's batiked animations, Carolee Schneemann's *Fuses,* several of Stan Brakhage's films, Diana Barrie's *My Version of the Fall,* and a few others, they remain the most enjoyable, sensual, sophisticated directly painted films I know. Noteworthy, too, is Lye's deft handling of the bits of stencilled and painted text which dance through his rhythmic, colorful compositions. Many recent filmmakers have explored the uses of printed text in films, but no one has demonstrated a more engaging sense of timing with words than Lye does in *Musical Poster #1* (one of the most cheerful bits of anti-Nazi propaganda ever made) and *Trade Tattoo.* Lye claims to have experimented with scratch films as early as 1922 in Australia, though this method seems not to have produced significant films until decades later. *Free Radicals*, however, was worth the wait; it is a *tour de force* handling of one of the most difficult methods of working with film. In fact, the only scratch films of comparable dexterity that I know are Norman McLaren's *Hen Hop* (1942, the middle section) and Diana Barrie's *Magic Explained* (1980).

Lye explored other filmic areas as well. His first completed film, *Tusalava* (1929), is an early abstract animation. In *Rainbow Dance* (1936) and *Trade Tattoo* he experimented with manipulating the three matrices of Gasparcolor to create new, nonrealistic colors. In *Colour Cry* (1952) he extended Hans Richter's "rayogram" method of laying objects directly on unexposed filmstock to create direct imagery. During the forties he made several live-action documentaries in England, before coming to the U.S. in 1944 and regularly contributing to the *The March of Time.*

Figures of Motion also helps clear up a widespread confusion about a film often incorrectly attributed to Lye: Charles Ridley's *The Panzer Ballet,* in which footage of Nazi soldiers and leaders marching and saluting is skillfully and amusingly reworked so that the Nazis seem to dance to the "Lambeth Walk." Lye's use of the same song in *Swinging the Lambeth Walk,* and perhaps the upbeat mood these two films share, resulted in the assumption that Ridley's film was an alternate version of *Swinging the Lambeth Walk*; rental catalogues sometimes call it *Lambeth Walk—Nazi Style. The Panzer Ballet* is a remarkable film in its own right (it's been one of my favorite Lye films!) and an interesting predecessor to Bruce Conner's work.

In his collected essays, Lye distinguishes his work from conventional films, which "visualize historical analysis," providing us "with literary drama, not with life." For Lye, film's essential function was not to dramatize stories, but to explore movement: "if we think of physical things in terms of movement we avoid the confusion of 'life' with 'truth.' Movement is strictly the language of life. It expresses nothing but the initial, living connotations of life. It is the earliest language." If I understand him, Lye identifies the earliest language with the "old brain," the central core of the human brain which evolved long before the more recent outer layers. This earlier brain has continued to express itself through motion—in the ritual activities of "primitive" societies, in dance, and most recently in the "kinetic arts": film and kinetic sculpture. While the more sophisticated levels of the brain enable us to meditate on the meanings

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of our movements, the cinema can properly visualize "only movement, it cannot visualize meaning...." Further, if we meditate on the meaning of things too much, "if we lend to things a critical self-consciousness, we are substituting imagination for movement and sentimentalizing the physical past." One of the functions of the arts of motion, and especially film, is "to correct memory against the sentimentalities of meditation," or to put it another way, to create "a vicarious experience on an 'old' brain or sensory level of aesthetic emotion." In his later years Lye became increasingly convinced that particular shapes generated in abstract compositions are representations of genetic information, messages from primal evolutionary levels.

The essays in *Figures in Motion* do not suggest that Lye was a rigorous or systematic thinker, but they do reveal that, for him, the films were a good deal more than technical experiments or bits of visual pleasure. Further, his descriptions of his lifelong fascination with "direct bodily empathy"—a method he devised to feel his way into the movements of people, animals, plants, objects, so that he could subsequently represent their movements with integrity—helps to account for the considerable power and accessibility of his abstract imagery. Since my only experience of Lye's painting and sculpture is the illustrations in *Figures of Motion,* I cannot make a considered judgment about them, but Lye's comments make clear that this work shares many of the concerns of his filmmaking.

Finally, while I'm pleased that Lye's experimental writings are now available, I find them unreadable. At best, the selections seem like overly cute, lightweight versions of some of Gertrude Stein's more successful prose experiments. Indeed, Lye did a title page drawing for a British edition of Stein's *An Acquaintance with Description.*

Hopefully, *Figures of Motion* will result in an increased interest in Lye's films, and many more people will have an opportunity to enjoy them. But programmers must be careful. Since Lye's films are largely *about* color and texture, good prints are essential, and not all the prints available for rental are decent. (Lye once offered to pay to have some of these *not* distributed.) I've had good luck with the Museum of Modern Art prints of *Colour Box, Trade Tattoo, Swinging the Lambeth Walk,* and *Musical Poster #1.* Cecile Starr (50 W. 96th St., New York, N.Y. 10025) has prints of *Tusalava, Kaleidoscope,* and *Colour Flight;* Starr and MOMA have *Colour Cry, Rhythm, Free Radicals, Particles in Space,* and *Tal Farlow.*

Scott MacDonald teaches at Utica College, Utica, New York, and has written on independent film for such publications as Film Quarterly, Film Culture, and Afterimage.

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ANNIVERSARY ALBUM: AIVF AT 10

photos by Corky Lee



Mary Guzzy (right), AIVF administrative director, greets Patricia Scott of the Mayor's Office of Film, Theater, and Broadcasting, who declared June 4 AIVF Day in New York City. Guzzy coordinated the work of the 10th Anniversary Committee.



AIVF membership director and master party tactician Andrea Estepa matches smiles with the brother from another planet, award presenter Joe Morton.



Nam June Paik (left), whose sartorial splendor caught the eye of the New York Times style page, chats with award winner Howard Wise (right), founder of Electronic Arts Intermix, accompanied here by board member Chris Choy.



Low-tech virtuoso Bob Brodsky and an unidentified member watch a few moments of the Anniversary compilation tape, featuring excerpts from almost 50 films and tapes created by AIVF members.



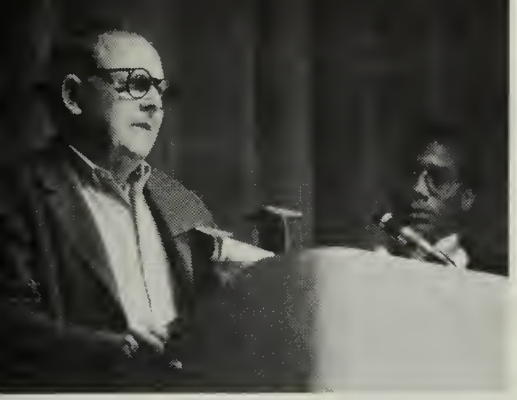
AIVF board chair Lillian Jimenez seems to be admiring board president Robert Richter's one-of-a-kind tie. Partygoers wondered if Jimenez's seamstress and Richter's tailor might be friends.



Backstage at MOMA, salsero turned actor Ruben Blades (right), star of "Crossover Dreams," and award winner Eduardo Diaz from San Antonio's Guadalupe Cultural Center get acquainted.



Indie Award-winning critic Clyde Taylor credited the quality and strength of Black filmmakers' work for "prodding" him to write about film.



As Joe Morton looks on, filmmaker Emile de Antonio accepts the Indie Award for Outstanding Achievement for Martin Sheen, who was unable to attend.



Ted Churchill and friend Toni DeTore pose with Ted's photo from the first Indie Awards celebration. Said Churchill, one of the industry's leading Steadicam operators, "I may have had more hair then, but I make more money now."



Award presenter B. Ruby Rich (right) of the New York State Council on the Arts catches up with Jeanine Meilinger of Chicago's Center for New Television, recipient of the media art center Indie.



Executive director Lawrence Sapadin (right) accepts the Kodak Award for Excellence from Kodak executive Hugh Roger-Smith, during the awards ceremony held at the Museum of Modern Art.



Master of ceremonies Richard Schmiechen, who dusted off his Oscar tux for the occasion, catches a hug from fellow AIVF board member Loni Ding.



Actress Jane Alexander (right), now producing her first film, presented the Life Achievement Award to ground-breaking producer Madeline Anderson, who has worked in independent media for 25 years.



Volunteers dish it out at the late night buffet at World/El Mundo. (From left to right) Barbara Solow, Mary Helen Berg, Ronald Gray, and Bienvenida Matias were among the dozens of members who took tickets, handed out programs, directed traffic, and cleaned up at evening's end.

THE UNITED STATES FILM FESTIVAL: SUNDANCE'S NEW KID



Union brothers struggle to organize the Chicago stockyards in "The Killing Floor," award winner at last year's United States Film Festival.
Photo Jim Taylor

With increased media coverage, sold-out screenings, and the highest box office revenues in its eight-year history, the United States Film Festival, now sponsored by the Sundance Institute, appears to have achieved unprecedented success. According to the festival's managing director, Tony Safford, Sundance stepped in at the festival's request. After putting together six independently run festivals, he explained, the organizers were showing symptoms of burnout. The prominent resource center for independent film production gladly accepted the chance to promote films. Sundance's sponsorship provides the festival with a full-time administrative base and staff: Safford, director of film development programs Jennifer Walz, and publicist Saundra Saperstein. (Utah Film Development's Lawrence Smith remains as programmer.) At the same time, Safford said, the festival lends "a nice symmetry" to the Institute's activities.

"It's not just that Sundance is sponsoring it," observed Neal Miller, producer of *The Roommate.* "It's basically Sundance's festival at this point. They know how to promote it and have the clout to get the right people from L.A." Still, the debate over the practical value of the festival and its new sponsor continues. While Sundance's prestige and Robert Redford's notoriety brought more attention to this showcase than ever before, the $2,500 cash prizes for best feature and documentary went to films already in distribution: Joel and Ethan Coen's *Blood Simple* and Joel DeMott and Jeff Kreines's *Seventeen.* However, honorable mentions sparked both press and distributor interest in lesser-known films. To keep the emphasis on the films, Redford's role was limited and primarily symbolic. He appeared at a pre-opening fundraiser and led a seminar on feature film directing, but kept a low profile, fearing he would become the exclusive focus of attention.

The United States Film Festival programmers saw 100-odd films during the year-long selection process, ultimately choosing 11 features and 15 documentaries for competition. In addition to films solicited through last fall's open call, *The Independent*'s "In and Out of Production" column, other trade listings, and the IFP market were carefully canvassed, Safford said, adding, "We actually go out and pursue films." Among the documentaries in competition were Greta Schiller, Robert Rosenberg, and John Scagliotti's *Before Stonewall,* Jill Godmillow's *Far from Poland,* Pat Ferraro's *Hopi: Songs of the Fourth World,* and Martin Bell, Cheryl McCall, and Mary Ellen Mark's *Streetwise.* Feature selections included Victor Nunez's *Flash of Green,* Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger than Paradise,* William Duke and Elsa Rassbach's *The Killing Floor,* and John Sayles's *The Brother from Another Planet.* When asked whether, in the future, Sundance projects would automatically receive attention, Safford replied, "We want some autonomy, but that might happen."

The festival coordinators made a strong effort to keep the spotlight on both fiction and documentary films, despite Sundance's orientation toward feature production. Because "documentaries often suffer" in this context, Safford has named an International Documentary Association member to the festival's board and listed documentaries before features in the 1985 catalogue. Nonetheless, Les Blank, maker of *In Heaven There Is No Beer,* " detected a bit more interest in theatrical films—they were more concerned about the glamorous ones." On the other hand, in the eyes of *The Times of Harvey Milk* director Robert Epstein, "There was no difference, no dichotomy. There was a sense of nurturing all kinds of independent filmmaking."

Judging was deemed eclectic by some and unimaginative by others. Neal Miller believed "the judging was a little off-the-wall. They went for the more avant-garde, strange films." Safford admitted that the documentary judges' tastes uniformly favored cinema verite, but said he plans to add two more judges in 1986 to encourage more variety. "We looked at the strength of the filmmaker to tell a story," claimed feature competition judge Mirra Bank. She said the panelists sought "real vision, a unique vocabulary—films that were powerful as entertainment or as narrative experiences. In going back over what to keep in, we paid special attention to films that remained engaging, strong, and unique—those that consistently nailed us."

Everyone raved about the Wasatch Mountain setting, the social events, and the lodgings. "We can take over a whole town and create a critical mass effect," Safford said. Participating filmmakers, whose travel and accommodations were provided by the festival, mingled with an au-



"Before Stonewall," prize winner at the 1985 U.S. Film Festival, documents the polite pleas for acceptance of homosexuals that later exploded into demands for gay rights.
Courtesy filmmakers

dience of representatives from Orion, Cinecom, independent distributors and programmers, not to mention an enthusiastic local general public. Representatives from the Denver, Aspen, Sonoma, and Hawaiian Film Festivals also attended. Saperstein's press list was also impressive: Cable News Network, L.A. CBS News, *USA Today, Variety,* the *Hollywood Reporter, Millimeter,* and *On Location.*

Attendance was high throughout and responses were enthusiastic. Epstein recalled, "Two older women in their seventies came up to me after the film, grabbed my arm, shook it, and said, 'This is what independent filmmaking is really about.'" *Kaddish* director Steve Brand was also pleased. "It was interesting to see the reaction of a predominantly WASP and Mormon community to a film with specifically Jewish content. I kept asking myself, 'How could people relate to the film?' But there was a good discussion," he said.

At the seminars and workshops, *American Playhouse*'s Lindsay Law, Cinecom's Ira Deutchman, and filmmaker Jonathan Demme were among the panelists who discussed fundraising, directorial technique, signing Hollywood stars on a tight budget, and the relations between documentary representation and reality. The audience generally found the workshops accessible and refreshingly unacademic, although Schiller observed the workshops she attended were "exclusively focused on traditional narrative filmmaking." Epstein, however, was "honored to find myself for the first time on a panel with the likes of Fred Wiseman."

An international showcase of foreign films, an homage to Francois Truffaut, and the American premieres of John Schlesinger's *The Falcon and the Snowman,* Gillian Armstrong's *Mrs. Soffel,* and Woody Allen's *The Purple Rose of Cairo* accompanied the competition. Competing films were shown twice, and if sold out, additional screenings were scheduled. There was reasonable improvement in projection problems that hampered previous festivals, but mishaps were not entirely eliminated.

—Coco Fusco

The 1986 festival will take place in Park City, Utah, from January 17–26. Interested filmmakers should contact Tony Safford at the Sundance Institute, 19 Exchange Place, Salt Lake City, UT 84111; (801) 521-9330. Deadline for entry: November 8. Films in 16mm and 35mm accepted.

Coco Fusco is a New York-based freelance writer who specializes in film.

HEMISFILM FESTIVAL CANCELLED

The twentieth annual Hemisfilm International Festival, set for next January in San Antonio, Texas, will not take place due to the prolonged illness of its founder and executive director, Louis Reile. Hemisfilm is the festival arm of the International Fine Arts Center of the Southwest, headquartered at St. Mary's University. Reile hopes to resume the festival in January 1987.

The 1985 edition of Hemisfilm took place at St. Mary's on January 27–30. The winning films were: *The Killing Floor,* by William Duke and Elsa Rassbach (Best Feature); *High Schools,* by Charles Guggenheim and Nancy Sloss (Best Documentary Feature); *Yorktown,* by Charles Guggenheim and Werner Schumann (Best Documentary Short); *Machine Story,* by Doug Miller (Best Animation); *Quest,* by Saul and Elaine Bass (Best Short Fiction). Receiving awards in the Arts and Artists category: *Paul Cadmus, Enfant Terrible at 80,* by David Sutherland; *Indochina Re-Visited, Portrait by Jean Despugois,* by Phillip Thomas and Judy Williams; *Empire City,* by Michael Blackwood. Winner in Theater and Drama: *Sanford Meisner: The Theater's Best Kept Secret,* by Kent Paul and Nick Doob. Special Jury Award: *Breaking Silence,* by Theresa Tollini. Winners in minor categories: *Sorte,* by Joaquin Cortes; *Thunderbirds,* by Saul Leyton and Gil Rosoff; *Visions, A Form of Magic,* by Don Thompson and Elizabeth Lowry; *The Joy that Kills,* by Tina Rathborne, Tony Mark and Sue Jeff; *Lousy Little Sixpence,* by Alec Morgan and Gerald Bostock.

—Gordon Hitchens

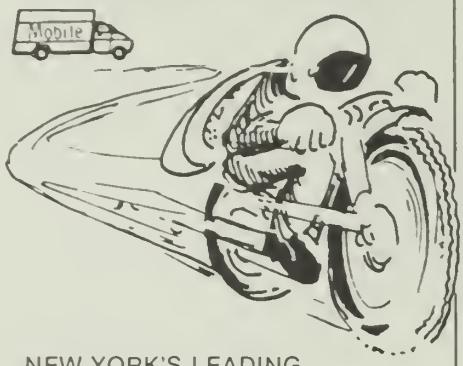
IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement,** and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

● *BUCKS COUNTY FILM FESTIVAL*, Pennsylvania, Nov. 13–16. 3rd national short film competition awards $1,200 in 4 categories. In 1984, best of fest won by *Twilight,* by animators Rolf Bronniman and F. Michael Dorsey. Other money winners were *Miraj,* by Molly Burgess; *Made for TV,* by Jaime Hellman; & *Sprout Wings and Fly,* by Les Blank, Cece Conway & Alice Gerrard. Of 60 entries, 8 award winners were screened. This year Tony Buba will show his films & conduct a workshop & there will be an open screening of films not included in final program. Judges: Linda Blackaby, Amos Vogel & Charles Samu. As an encore to last year's presentation of Bulgarian animators, Samu

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may screen the work of Russian short filmmakers. Films must have been completed after Jan. 1982. 16mm only, 30 mins. max. Independent films only. Categories: animation, art/exp., narrative, doc./nonfiction & student. Fees: under 20 mins., $15; 20–30 mins., $20. Fest pays return. Winning films tour eastern PA in late Nov. Sponsored by Film Five, a nonprofit filmmaking coop. Deadline: Oct. 9. Contact: John Toner, Bucks County Film Festival, c/o Smith & Toner, 8 E. Court St., Doylestown, PA 18901; (215) 345-5663 eves.

● *CINEMAGIC SHORT FILM & VIDEO SEARCH*, Los Angeles, Nov. 23. 7th annual horror, fantasy & sci-fi competition sponsored by *Cinemagic* magazine, held as part of the Starlog Fantasy Festival over the weekend of Nov. 22–24. The Starlog theme this year is the "magic of filmmaking." Hollywood film celebs are expected. Last year there were 80 submissions; 3 prizes in S-8 & 16mm & 3 in video were awarded. Equipment awards included Nizo Integral 7 camera for all the S-8 winners. All winners screened at awards ceremony. Suggested themes/categories are sci-fi, horror, fantasy, animation. Formats: S-8, 16mm, VHS, Beta 2 & ¾". Max. running time 15 min. Entry fee: $5. Send SASE to Cinemagic Rules, 475 Park Ave. S., NY, NY 10016.

● *NATIONAL HOUSING FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL*, New York, November. The Media Network & a coalition of housing & tenant groups are presenting this first-time event to "draw attention to the broad range of housing problems affecting the nation & the media resources which deal with it." Organizers hope to recognize & highlight the best productions in the field & the most creative use of media by community groups. Screenings will occur over two evenings & one day, with award ceremony on the final evening. Prize-winning films will be chosen by a jury of housing activists & the audience. Festival open to works on housing or closely-related subjects in 16mm, ¾" & slides. Fee: $10. Deadline: Oct. 1. Cassettes OK for pre-selection. Send work to: Shelter Force, 380 Main St., E. Orange, NJ 07018. For more info: Tony Heriza, Media Network, (212) 620-0877.

● *NORTHWEST FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL*, Portland, OR, Nov. 14–24. 13th annual event sponsored by the Northwest Film Study Center, open to residents of OR, WA, MT, AK & BC. Last year approximately $3,000 in cash & lab services were awarded. Previous jurors have included Melinda Ward, Jim Hoberman, Amos Vogel, Gene Youngblood & Leonard Maltin. In 1984, 18 of 97 entries were selected for public screening. 7 were awarded first place distinctions. Featured work included animation, humor, doc. & drama. Festival program toured 17 locations around the country. Work must have been completed after Sept. 1, 1984. Enclose return postage for mail or UPS. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8 & ¾". Apply to enter other formats. Deadline: Oct. 1. For forms, contact: Northwest Film & Video Center, Northwest Film Study Center, 1219 S.W. Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156.

● *VIDEO SHORTS FIVE*, Seattle, Oct. 12–13. $100 honorarium paid to top 10 tapes submitted for open competition. Compilation tape is made for distribution & royalties paid to makers. Last year approximately 150 tapes were received in ¾", VHS & Beta. Check with festival for this year's format requirements (VHS is iffy). Max. running time 5 min. Excerpts & segments from longer pieces are OK, but presumably work should be able to stand on its own. Judging will occur during public exhibition. Final evening will be devoted to winning tapes & awards presentation. Fee: $10, covers return postage. Deadline: Oct. 5. For entry forms, contact: Video Shorts Five, 932 12th Ave., Seattle, WA 98122, or call for info: B. Parker Lindner or Mike Cady, Sea King Media Access, (206) 322-9010.

● *WORKS BY WOMEN*, New York, Oct. 11–12. Barnard College Library has announced the program for its 9th annual video & film festival. [See "Barnard: Celluloid Sisters," *The Independent*, March 1985.] The festival opens on Friday at 1 p.m. with work by Nan Hoover, Debra Denker, Judy Mann, Anita Thatcher & Shirley Clarke. Clarke will be present for discussion after the video program. The documentary feature *Small Happiness: Women of a Chinese Village*, by Carma Hinton & Richard Gordon, will follow the video program. Mirra Bank, Ellen Hovde & Muffie Meyer's narrative feature *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute* will be shown at 7:30 Friday night in Lehman Auditorium, preceded by Judi Fogelman's animated short *Handing the Baton*. A reception & discussion with Bank will follow the film. On Saturday evening at 7:30 the festival closes with Joanne Corso's short *Bean Planet*, followed by the documentary feature *Seeing Red: Stories of American Communists*, by Julia Reichert & James Klein. For tickets and further information, contact: Media Services, Barnard College Library, Broadway at 116th St., NY, NY 10027–6598; (212) 280-2418.

FOREIGN

● *BMA, BLAT MEDICAL FILM & VIDEO AWARDS*, London, Sept. 30. For the first time in its 28-year history, the British Medical Association Awards will accept in competition PAL-compatible work originating in video. Open to professional film companies, institutional departments & independent producers. Gold, silver & bronze awards to medical films "judged to be outstanding in their creativity, subject, accuracy & educational effectiveness." The Harold E. Lewis Award is given to the film judged to have made an "outstanding contribution to science" for professional or lay audiences. Film & tapes must have been completed within the past 3 years. Primary audience may be doctors, parents, teenagers, patients; possible purposes include diagnosis, prescription, understanding. Deadline for BLAT application is open. Film or tape must follow within 14 days. The BLAT award may be given to a sponsored film only. Contact: Film Librarian, British Medical Association, BMA House, Towestock Sq., London WC1 H9JP, England; tel. 01 387 4499 ext. 321. For the separate BMA Film & Video Competition (open) the deadline for forms is Aug. 30 & Sept. 30 for works. Fee: 15 pounds. Apps. available at AIVF.

● *BONN EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL*, W. Germany, Dec. 6–8. For the past 6 years Film-AG Bonn & an alternative independent film coop, Die Einstellung, have presented this festival of experimental short films. In 1984, they programmed approx. 75 films from around the world, heavily emphasizing new work from Germany. U.S. participants included Judy Filiere, Sol Rubin & Ye Sook Rhee. Most films are 8mm, but some are 16mm & even 35mm. All themes & genres welcome. "The films should be a little experimental in the manner of making &/or themes." Max. running time 20 mins. For fest program, a short synopsis &/or graphic program should accompany app. Maker pays shipping there; fest pays return. Fee: 3DM per min., with minimum payment of 20DM. Address: Film-AG, c/o Stefan Droessler, Bonnerstr. 54, D-5300 Bonn 2, W. Germany, or Filmgroup Die Einstellung, c/o Hans Illner, Mechenstr. 73, D-5300 Bonn 1, W. Germany.

● *FILMS ON JAPAN*, Tokyo, October & November. 29th competition sponsored by UniJapan Film, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Asahi Shimbun Publishing & others to "stimulate the production of cultural, scientific, industrial & documentary films on Japan as well as to award prizes to those which best introduce Japan abroad." Categories for films in 16mm or 35mm up to 60 min. include: general films on Japan; films dealing with Japanese culture & arts; films dealing with Japanese science & technology. Jury awards gold & silver prizes in each category as well as Japan *Times* Prize. Winning films tour Japan. Script & stills should accompany entry forms (avail. at AIVF). Deadline: forms: Sept. 14. Address: Organizing Committee, 25th Annual Competition for Films on Japan, c/o UniJapan, 9-13 Ginza 5, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104, Japan. Deadline: films, Sept. 20. Address: c/o Hankyu Express Int. Co., Ltd., 42-2526 Baraki, Ichikawa City 272-0, Japan; tel. (03) 572-5106; telex J28599.

● *INPUT 86*, Montreal, April 6-12. INPUT is an annual forum for the exchange of programming & ideas between public TV representatives & producers worldwide. [See "Field Report: Buying Time," in this issue.] Although there is no market & no awards, it is a rare opportunity for programmers to see what has been exhibited on TV in other countries—and sometimes what has *not*. Acceptance for airing on PTV is *not* a requirement for eligibility; films or tapes merely must have been *submitted* to national PBS or a local station. An international committee will select from eligible entries. A Rockefeller Foundation travel grant which has assured the attendance of independents expires in 1986. Entries, whether they originate on film or tape, can only be submitted on ¾" cassette, any standard. For further information, contact the U.S. representatives to the international committee: Joyce Campbell, WETA-TV, Box 2626, Washington, DC 20013, (703) 998-2600; Carolyn Holderman, South Carolina ETV, Drawer L, Columbia, SC 29250. Deadline: Oct. 1. Apps. available at AIVF.

● *MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILM & VIDEO ART*, Canada, Nov. 19-24. Open to work in 16mm, 35mm & ¾" on painting, sculpture, architecture, design, artifacts, photography, cinema, dance, music, literature. In 1984, 10 prizes & 6 honorable mentions given. Program included tribute to Carlos Vilardebo. Deadline: Sept. 6. Contact: Rene Rozon, c/o Vie des Arts, 373 St. Paul W., Montreal, PQ, Canada H2Y 2A7; (514) 287-0790 or (514) 282-0205.

● *SPORTS FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL*, Hungary, Oct. 21-26. 8th annual event open to fiction, documentary & educational works which document sports events, "popularize sports on an artistic level," explore the development of sports or a sports movement, encourage sports activity for young people, or teach health & exercise. The festival presents an opportunity for international sports films to be exhibited & for sports filmmakers to gather. Max. running time 25 min., but directors may allow longer films or tapes "if they are on a high artistic level or offer a peculiar value." Grand prizes include: Prize of the President of the Hungarian National Office for Physical Education and Sports & Prize of the International Olympic Committee. Special prizes awarded for best direction, script & photography. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, ¾", VHS, Beta any standard. Maker pays RT shipping. Deadline: Sept. 15. Address for forms (also avail. at AIVF): Sportsfilm Fesztival, 1054 Budapest, Rosenberg hp. U. 1., Hungary. Send films on cassette to Hungarofilm, Sportfilm Fesztival, 1021 Budapest, Budakesozi ut 51, Hungary.

● *SPORT IN FILM & VIDEO*, W. Germany, Nov. 14-15. This bi-annual international competition is sponsored by the German Sports Association & the Association of German Film & Video Amateurs, as well as the city of Mulheim/Ruhr & 2 international nonprofit film associations. Open to "documentaries, eyewitness accounts & films on current affairs, shorts, cartoons & light entertainment, education, instructional & scientific films as long as they relate to sports in the widest sense." Max. running time 20 mins. The aim of the event is to promote amateur film & video production & exhibition on sports topics. Films are submitted continuously during the year for a film-of-the-month competition for which a jury awards a 300DM prize. Films & videos from these events are entered in the bi-annual international competition. Five prizes here range from 500DM-3000DM. Reports of the festival are published in trade journals & the daily press. Makers must agree to allow non-commercial distribution by festival organizers. Deadline for film-of-the-month is the 15th of very month & final deadline for bi-annual is Oct. 15, 1986. No fee. Format: S-8, 16mm, VHS, Beta, ¾" PAL, SECAM only. Contact: Heinrich-Thone-Vokshochshal, Bergstrasse 1-3 Postfach 101953, P-4330 Mulheim Ruhr, W. Germany. Apps. available at AIVF.

● *TARBES INTERNATIONAL DAYS OF CARTOON & ANIMATED FILMS*, France, Nov. 12-17. For the 3rd consecutive year the tourist office of Tarbes, in association with the Cultural Development Center & the Association of Living Cinema, present this competition & special events program for animation. In addition to the competition prizes worth 15,000F, there will be a showing of award-winning work from Annecy, a special section on French animation featuring artist Paul Grumault & an animation workshop. In 1984, jury chair was J.L. Xiberras, director of the Annecy festival. 17 films in 16mm ranging from 4-13 mins., primarily from France, competed along with 1 film in 35mm & 2 in S-8. Production information to accompany application forms must be completed in French. Deadline: applications, Sept. 1; films, Oct. 15. Address: Journees du Film d'Animation de Tarbes, Syndicat d'Initiative, Place de Verdun, 65000 Tarbes, France; tel. (62) 93 36 62. Apps. available at AIVF.

● *UPPSALA FILM FESTIVAL*, Sweden, Oct. 18-27. This 4th international event features three main sections: children & youth films, shorts, features. Submissions welcome in any style. No commercial or tourist films. Open to amateur & professional filmmakers. Festival's stated aim is to encourage films "of good quality expressing a fine sense of humanity & to extend the distribution of foreign films in Sweden & Swedish films abroad." Films from the U.S. last year included *Cannonball*, by Gary Templeton; *TV Ads*, by Stanford Summers; *One Trick Pony*, by Robert M. Young; *Where Did You Get That Woman*, by Loretta Smith; *Renata* and *Bad Timing*, by Nancy Savoca; *Raygun's Nightmare*, by Peter Wallach; & others. 4 prizes are given for best children & youth film, animated film, documentary & best narrative. No entry fee. Fest pays return shipping. Formats: S-8, 16mm & 35mm. Videocassettes OK for preview. Deadline: forms & films or cassettes for preview, Sept. 2. Address: Uppsala Film Festival, Box 1746, S-751 47 Uppsala, Sweden; tel. (46) 18 103010; telex 76020. For air freight they recommend shipping agent Transportkompaniet Arlanda (Bertil Svedberg), Box 24, S-190 45 Stockholm-Arlanda, Sweden; telex 10924 TECARN S. Final date for films accepted by fest Oct. 1.

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IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION

Mary Guzzy



Peter White, as the young Memphis aristocrat Nat Ramsey, walks on the wild side with his working-glass girl, played by Beverly Moore, in "The Old Forest."
Courtesy filmmaker



Uncle Sam anoints another ministering angel in Diane Garey's recently completed documentary, "This Life's Work: A History of the American Nurse."

Films Charas founder Doris Kornish and New York City cafe owner Philip Hartman have begun production on **No Picnic**, a 16mm black and white feature about the gentrification of New York's Lower East Side. Scheduled to be released in the spring of 1986, *No Picnic* gathers a cast of "Loisaida" artists and down-and-outers, whose lives and fortunes contrast sharply with the clean, ruthless efficiency of real estate development in Manhattan. Utilizing New York talent and the city's many gritty locations, *No Picnic* is entirely funded by private sources.

This Life's Work: A History of the American Nurse, a one-hour documentary in production at Florentine Films of Massachusetts, chronicles the development of nursing from the Civil War to the war in Vietnam. Produced by Diane Garey, recent co-producer of *Niagra Falls: The Changing Nature of a New World Symbol* with Lawrence Hott, *This Life's Work* has received partial funding from the Connecticut Humanities Council and the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities.

Producer/dancer Lucy Hemmendinger is editing **passing through**, a 20-minute Super-8 exploration of the relationship between dance and the camera. Hemmendinger choreographed and shot *passing through,* which combines street dance with more abstract interludes. An original sound score by Shelley Hirsch and David Simons accompanies the performance by Jennifer Monson, Alison Salzinger, Peggy Vogt, and Hemmendinger. *passing through* was presented live in April at New York's P.S. 122.

Stretching the parameters of the music video genre, filmmaker Meg Foss and songwriter/singer Len Amato of the New York-based rock band Sway have completed a three-and-a-half minute video of the band performing **Nicaragua**. Unlike most music videos, *Nicaragua* attempts to explore social and human rights issues through its music, lyrics, and images. Live performance footage is combined with still photographs of Nicaragua by Lona Foote, video footage from AMNLAE and footage of the 1985 April Actions demonstrations in Washington, D.C. Total cost of the piece, according to Foss, was $3,000.

First-time producer Bryan Root of Philadelphia has completed a 21-minute 16mm experimental narrative entitled **Dailyrest's Destiny**, dealing with the conflicted subconscious of a filmmaker on his way to a grant proposal interview. The film was produced at the Tyler School of Art with funds from the Tyler Programming Board, a private investor, and the filmmaker, who also wrote, directed, narrated, and edited the project. Total budget for *Dailyrest's Destiny:* $1,500.

California producer/director Vivian Kleiman has completed two projects, one in film and one in video. **California Gold**, a 20-minute docudrama, contrasts the experiences of a Native American woman and a pioneer woman as recounted in their letters and memoirs. The film was funded by the California Council for the Humanities, the California Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Film Fund. Kleiman also produced the video documentary **Judy Chicago's The Birth Project**, a chronicle of the needlework collaboration which premiered at the ACA Galleries in Manhattan. The tape is also 20 minutes and was shot by Francis Reid.

Agri-business and its role in growing world hunger is the focus of **Hungry for Profit**, Robert Richter's 90-minute documentary film recently broadcast on public television. The governments, international banks, and U.S. and European corporations controlling the cash crops grown in the Third World to feed the industrialized West have caused the displacement of millions of small farmers, destruction of forests, and the spreading of deserts and famine. Shot in 10 countries on five continents, *Hungry for Profit* probes the policies and practices of such firms as Ralston Purina, Dole, Gulf and Western, Del Monte, and Citibank. The late WNET Independent Documentary Fund, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Ford Foundation, and the Maryknoll Missioners provided major funding for the project.

Miranda Smith of New York completed her 26-minute 16mm documentary, **Cowboys' Claim** in April. Shot in six weeks on a budget of $85,000 raised from private sources, Smith's first film explores the life of the Florida cattle rancher. Founded on the traditions of the family, the cowboys' middle-class way of life is threatened by the commercialization of Florida's grasslands and the huge influx of people to the state. The film combines voiceover narrations, scenes of the cowboys' life of hard work in harmony with nature, and interviews with ranchers and business people. Shots of neon-lit strips of Florida highway clogged with motels and fast food restaurants juxtaposed with images of solitary men cruising the marshes in propeller boats evoke the conflict between progress and tradition.

Moving image media brings two southern writers to the attention of a new public. Atlanta

producer John Arthos has completed a 15-minute video adaptation of the Eudora Welty story, **A Worn Path,** the tale of a rural Mississippi Black woman who makes a long journey to procure medicine for her sick grandchild. Arthos's videotape attempts to faithfully recreate Welty's themes, "the degradation of poverty, the dignity of age, the transcendent power of love, and prejudice..."

Producer/director Steven Ross had just taken a position at the University of Memphis's Department of Communication Arts when he became interested in the short story, "The Old Forest," by Tennessee writer Peter Taylor. Ross's initial contact with Taylor to obtain permission to adapt the story led to a screenplay collaboration. **The Old Forest** examines the twilight of paternalism in the pre-World War II South. A working-class girl is the only passenger in the car of Nat Ramsey, an upper-class boy engaged to a Memphis socialite, when he has an accident the day before his wedding. The girl disappears into the Old Forest and must be found lest scandal taint the marriage of Nat and his debutante fiance. The hour-long film was completed on a budget of less than $100,000. Funding came largely from the Tennessee Committee on the Humanities, with additional funds from the First Tennessee Bank, the Memphis Plough Community Foundation, and the Scheidt Family Foundation. *The Old Forest* was screened at the 1985 American and Athens International Film Festivals, and will be seen on the Arts and Entertainment Network this fall.

Producers John Antonelli and Will Parrinello have garnered praise for **Kerouac**, a feature length docudrama on the life of the Beat Generation's most famous and infamous writer, Jack Kerouac, who defined the essence of hipdom and died of drink at age 47. Actor Jack Coulter portrays the author of *On The Road* in scenes restaged from Kerouac's life. Archival footage of Kerouac on the Steve Allen show and interviews with his contemporaries round out the 73-minute film. After screenings at Filmex, the Denver International Film Festival, and the United States Film Festival, among others, the film will open at the Bleecker St. Cinema in September. *Kerouac* spent five long years on the road to completion; along the way funding was provided by the California Council for the Humanities and the Massachusetts Humanities Foundation.

Innocent kids take on the big city in *Amateur Hour*, a 90-minute first feature collaboration by producer Susan Kaufman and director/writer Stanford Singer. Described as a "postmodern fable" about "television, terrorism, and frozen asparagus," *Amateur Hour* pits Paul and Donna, two midwestern babes in the woods, against a wicked father, the Evil Empire of cable television, and a pile of uncatalogued videocassettes. *Amateur Hour*, financed by a limited partnership, was brought in for "under $200,000," according to Kaufman. It premiered at the Bombay Cinema in New York last May and is headed for selected film festivals this fall.

DISTRIBUTION DIRECTORY:

No Picnic: Doris Kornish & Phil Hartman, (212) 533-4602; *This Life's Work: A History of the American Nurse:* Florentine Films, 20 Kingsley Ave., Haydenville, MA 01039, (413) 268-7934; *passing through:* Lucy Hemmendinger, 337 W. 21st St., NY, NY 10011, (212) 929-1278; *Nicaragua:* Margaret Mary Foss Film Services, 53 Crosby St., NY, NY 10012, (212) 966-6657; *Dailyrest's Destiny:* Bryan Root, 6728 N. 8th St., 1st fl., Philadelphia, PA 19216, (215) 763-2265/548-7699; *California Gold* and *Judy Chicago's The Birth Project:* Vivian Kleiman, 4560 Horton St., #408, Emeryville, CA 94608; *Hungry for Profit:* Richter Productions, 330 W. 42nd St., NY, NY 10036, (212) 947-1395; *Cowboys' Claim:* Miranda Smith Productions, 30 W. 74th St., Ste. 4D, NY, NY 10023, (212) 362-1320; *A Worn Path:* Minority Film Services, 164 4th St. NE, #8, Atlanta, GA 30308; *The Old Forest:* Steven Ross, Memphis State University, Dept. of Theatre and Communication Arts, Memphis, TN 38152, (901) 454-2565; *Kerouac:* Mill Valley Film Group, 305 Montford Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941, (415) 381-9309; *Amateur Hour:* Amateur Hour Productions, 182 Waverly Pl., NY, NY 10014, (212) 533-0551.

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Conferences ● Workshops

● *IMAGINACTION, 9TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ALLIANCE FOR CULTURAL DEMOCRACY:* Meeting of community-based arts programs & activist artists in visual arts, theater, music, media, literature, dance, arts administration, etc. This year's theme: self-determination is cultural democracy in action. Registration, $45 ACD members, $55 nonmembers & add $10 after 9/30/85. Oct. 11–14 in Chicago, IL. Contact: Allen Schwartz, ACD, 2262 W. 119th Pl., Blue Island, IL 60406, (312) 388-3871.

● *VIDEO EXPO:* Exhibits of the latest in video equipment & technology & expanded seminar program w/ full & half-day sessions. New York: Sept. 30–Oct. 4, 1985, NY Passenger Ship Terminal, NYC. Florida: Dec. 9–13, 1985, Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress, Orlando. Contact: Sheila Alper, Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc., 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604, (914) 328-9157, or toll-free, (800) 248-KIPI.

● *INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS 1985–2000:* Conference on maximizing business profits & social benefits, sponsored by the Public Service Satellite Consortium & the Int'l Council for Planning and Innovation. Worldwide video conference linking the press, int'l government officials & telecommunications experts on 5 continents. Oct. 22–26, San Francisco, CA. Contact: Carin Christian, (703) 437-0027, MD.

● *DESIGNING & PREPARING CAMERA-READY ARTWORK:* 1-day seminar sponsored by the Performance Seminar Group. Philadelphia, Oct. 9, Sheraton U. City, 36th & Chestnut Sts., (215) 387-8000; Washington, DC, Ramada Hotel Old Town, 901 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria, VA, (703) 683-6000. Contact: Performance Seminar Group, 11 Commerce St., Norwalk, CT 06850, (203) 852-0429.

Editing Facilities

● *SAN FRANCISCO ¾" EDITING:* Sony Type 5 system, Beta & VHS dubbing. $15/hr. self-service, $25/hr. w/operator. By appointment. Mermaid Prod., (415) 777-3105, CA.

● *BEST BETACAM DEAL:* Production services, dubs, off-line editing. VTA, ARTS. (212) 255-1809, NYC.

● *NEGATIVE MATCHING:* 16mm, Super-16, 35mm cut for regular printing, blowup, or video transfer. Clean work at reasonable rates. One White Glove, Tim Brennan, (718) 897-4145, NYC.

● *¾" VIDEO EDITING:* For rent on daily, weekly, or project basis. (212) 966-6326, NYC.

● *¾" EDITING/POSTPRODUCTION:* Left & independent documentaries our first love. Sony 5850 system, SMPTE time code, Microgen character generator, full sound mix, Ikegami & JVC cameras, Sony BVU 110 & 4800 decks. $40/hr. w/ editor. 10% discount to AIVF members. Debbie or David, 29th Street Video, (212) 594-7530, NYC.

● *¾" EDITING:* JVC 8250 w/ convergence controller, microgen character generator, $20/hr. Discounts for long-term projects. On Track Video, (212) 864-5166, NYC.

● *16MM NEGATIVE MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut at reasonable rates. Bruce, (212) 228-7352, NYC.

● *FILM TITLE SERVICES:* Camera-ready art &/or shooting of titles. Many typefaces, design consultation, crawls. Reasonable rates, fast service. (212) 460-8921, NYC.

● *¾" EDITING:* Soho on the Bayou. Kingfish Prod., direct from New Orleans, introduces its no-frills off-line editing suite w/ Sony 5850s & red beans & rice. Convenient Soho locations, low rates. (212) 925-8448, NYC.

● *QUALITY EDITING ROOM FOR LESS: ¾"* and VHS-to-¾" w/convergence Super 90 tape-

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● *EDITING FACILITY:* Quiet, bright, spacious, video editing room off Grand St., lower east side. Independent/arts projects only, $15–20/hr. Flexible hours. Jeff, (212) 475-4094, NYC.

● *16MM EDITING & POSTPRODUCTION:* In sunny Oakland. 6-plate Euro-flatbed, 2 fully-equipped benches & motorized sync; adjacent transfers, projection, narration recording & free parking. 24 hr. access. BAVC, FAF, AIVF discount. (415) 436-6978, CA.

● *TEXAS FILM & VIDEO EDITING:* 6-plate Moviola in comfortable cutting room w/ phone, fridge, sound transfers. Sony BVU-800 off-line & on-line editing. Affordable rates. Ron Zimmerman, Visual Evidence Inc., 411 Bonham-at-the-Alamo, San Antonio, TX, (512) 225-6708/299-1400.

Films ● Tapes Wanted

● *DISTRIBUTOR SEEKS INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO PRODUCTIONS:* Specialty films/videos for health care markets, but other subject areas also of interest. Highly targeted, individualized marketing used to reach prime buyers. Contact: Motion Inc., 3138 Highland Pl. N.W., Washington, DC 20008, (202) 363-9450.

● *MEET THE FILMMAKER:* Series at Brooklyn College Institute for Retired Professionals & International Center in NY (foreign gov. reps & others). Your presence, short films & promotional literature will help popularize your creations. Contact: Sol Rubin (charter member AIVF), Box 40, NYC 10038.

● *NIPPON AUDIO VISUAL LIBRARY:* Film/video archive in Tokyo seeks descriptive materials, w/ prices, of films & videotapes dealing w/ Vietnam War & related topics. Please mail duplicate to Gordon Hitchens, 214 W. 85th St., Apt. 3W, NYC 10024, (212) 877-6856/362-0254; or (516) 299-2114/299-2353.

● *VINCENT CHIN DOCUMENTARY:* Films, tapes, Super-8 footage covering nationwide Asian American community organizing around the Chin case, 1982–present. Also archival footage, home movies, etc. of Detroit Chinatown & Asian Americans. Negotiable fees. Contact: Film News Now Fnd., c/o 160 Fifth Ave., Suite 911, NYC 10010, (212) 243-2310.

● *LATINO CONSORTIUM* seeks programs of Latino themes for possible broadcast on public television. Will preview & select July 1–Sept. 30. Contact: Latino Consortium, 4401 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90027, (213) 667-9425.

● *EDUCATIONAL MOVIES:* Half-hr. educational films wanted for distribution to high schools. Programs marketed individually to specifically targeted segments of the high school market. Especially interested in programs on industrial arts, vocational education, career guidance, home economics & science. (914) 232-9551.

Freelancers

● *CAMERA CREWS:* Film & tape, CP-16R & Nagra. Sony BVP 300 & BVU 110. Editing, ENG & documentary crews available. Negotiable rates, top credits. Ron Zimmerman, Visual Evidence Inc., 411 Bonham-at-the-Alamo, San Antonio, TX, (512) 225-6708/299-1400.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER* w/ Sony M3 camera & broadcast gear. Available to shoot news, documentary, dance, etc. Full ENG package & crew as needed, commercial vehicle. Negotiable rates. L. Goodsmith, (212) 989-8157, NYC.

● *PROPOSAL DOCTORS:* Experienced producers help you get the money. (We've raised more than $1,000,000.) We'll edit, rewrite, polish your proposal, revise budgets & even give that "professional look" w/ our word processor. Victoria or Michael, (718) 802-0002, NYC.

● *FILM TITLE SERVICES:* Camera-ready art &/or shooting of titles. Many typefaces, design consultation, crawls. Reasonable rates, fast service. (212) 460-8921, NYC.

● *RESEARCHER/WRITER/LOCATION SCOUT:* Have worked w/ PBS documentaries, network news & special events depts. & independent documentary & narrative projects. Able to read 1,000 wpm for quick backgrounds on any subject. Native New Yorker familiar w/ locations & research & production facilities in the tri-state area. Familiar w/ major metropolises abroad & able to consult on foreign locations. Functional French & Spanish. Reference available. Alyce Wittenstein, (212) 213-9047, NYC.

● *PRODUCTION ACCOUNTING:* Budget planning to bill paying. 15 years major market broadcast, multi-media & print production/finance experience. Diana Dring, (415) 567-6064, CA.

● *SAN FRANCISCO GAFFER AVAILABLE:* Also dolly grip & best boy on docs, industrials, commercials, features. NABET 15, in partnership w/ IATSE 659 camerawoman Caris Palm at Sobrante Studios. Steve Shriver, (415) 222-7377, CA.

● *ACTRESS FOR VOICEOVER WORK, TRANSLATOR:* Spanish & French. Sample tape of work done for Ministry of Education of Nicaragua available. R. Pikser, (212) 222-0865, NYC.

● *PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/CAMERAMAN:* Ikegami 77. Production of your corporate/organization documentary. $350/day. References on request for local & syndicated cablecasts. P. Greg Alland, (212) 420-0953, NYC.

● *EXPERIENCED FILM & TAPE PRODUCER:* 3 yrs. w/ RAI (Italian Public TV) in NYC. Willing to work as associate producer on independent features & documentary projects. References available upon request. Floriana Campanozzi, (212) 505-8772, NYC.

● *ANIMATOR:* Experienced working w/ independents, title design, character animation a specialty. Storyboards. Reasonable rates for reasonable schedules. Sample reel available. John Baumann, (212) 533-4705/254-6300, x294 or 331, NYC.

● *COMPOSER:* Award-winning composer interested in working w/ independent filmmakers. Has extensive Broadway & off-Broadway credits including premieres by Tennessee Williams, Lanford Wilson, Marsha Norman, & has scored films for PBS & CBS cable. Norman L. Berman, (212) 242-7293, NYC.

● *LOCATION SCOUT:* Available to scout any location in the 5 boroughs of NYC, the surrounding area,

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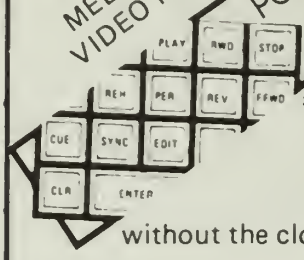
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● *EXPERIENCED RESEARCHER/SCRIPTWRITER:* Looking for projects. Have worked on anthropological ventures, researched Native Americans in Manhattan & presently writing a musical play. Ability in Spanish. Gwynne Vernet, 423 Broome St., NYC 10013, (212) 925-4114.

● *EXPERIENCED FILM SOUNDMAN:* Looking for work on your feature or documentary. Recordist, boom, or playback. Doug Tourtelot, (212) 489-0232, NYC.

● *PRODUCTIONS IN SPAIN:* Licensed production company w/ full crew available. Experienced in features, rock videos, documentaries, shorts & commercials. Absolutely low rates (our last rock video came in under a budget of $10,000). Possibilities of coproduction subsidies. Free Way Films, Calle Hortalez 74, Madrid, 28004, Spain. Telephone: 232.1136.

● *FULL-SERVICE MEDIA CONSULTING:* Film, TV, radio, theater. Proposals, scripts, packaging, fundraising & national marketing campaigns, pitches & presentations to networks, cable companies, studios, foreign TV, funders (incl. corporations, foundations, individuals, CPB, NEH & NEA). Concept development to completed works. Also resume & personal market service for producers, directors, writers. Diversified clientele: int'l & first-time producers a specialty. Highly experienced. Demonstrated results. Barbara Sirota Prods., (212) 777-6011, NYC.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER/EX-DANCER:* Specializing in documentation of & collaboration on dance projects. ¾" or ½" production, color camera. Performance, $150. Rehearsal, $100 excluding tape. Penny Ward/Video, (212) 228-1427, NYC.

Opportunities ● Gigs

● *INDEPENDENT FILM PRODUCER SEARCHING* for completed, contemporary, humanistic, *copyrighted* original screenplay by credited feature scriptwriter. Submit synopsis only (it will not be returned) w/ professional dossier to: Park Square Station, Box 15756, Stamford, CT 06901.

● *R.A.W. RESIDENCIES:* Real Art Ways, one of the US's largest centers for contemporary arts, supports artists residencies of 1–2 weeks at the Hartford Arts Center. Provides facilities, technical assistance, audio & video equipment access, housing & living stipend for 12 artists/year. Application deadline: Sept. 20, 1985. Panel notification by Oct. 15. Contact: Real Art Ways, R.A.W. Residencies, Box 3313, Hartford, CT 06103-3313, or call Judy Pillon, (203) 525-5521.

● *EXPERIENCED FILM EDITOR* sought for work in 1986 on 1-hour Black independent documentary *A Question of Color.* Film explores intragroup values in the Black American community: skin color, hair texture & facial features through personal interviews, archival film footage & photographs. Sensitivity to Black/white American race relations extremely important. Send resume & cover letter to: Kathe Sandler, 736 West End Ave., #1B, NYC 10025.

● *DISTRIBUTOR* looking for independent video & films to distribute worldwide. Contact: Bob McHatton, Tower Prods., 3002 Hennepin, Minneapolis, MN 55407.

● *WNET/THIRTEEN, NEW YORK* is now accepting submissions: new finished works by independent film-and videomakers not previously shown on Thirteen sought for Independent Focus series to begin April 1986. Deadline Oct. 1, 1985. Contact: Faith Kiermaier, Independent Focus, WNET/Thirteen, 356 W. 58th St., NYC 10019.

● *INTERN INTERESTED IN DISTRIBUTION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO* needed at DCTV. Preferably college student interested in arts administration. No pay, but access to video equipment & workshops. Contact: Ileana Maria Montalvo, Downtown Community TV Center, 87 Lafayette St., NYC 10013, (212) 966-4510.

● *SEEKING INDEPENDENT PRODUCER* w/ directing ability, experience, & own 35mm equipment, to shoot on location in Africa. Concept developed w/ North American & int'l markets in mind. Contact: Heritage, Box 46, Syracuse, NY 13201, (315) 742-7498.

● *POSITION AVAILABLE:* Visiting video artist for Spring semester, 1986. Full-time teaching load in intermediate & advanced level video courses, incl. an experimental class. Proficiency required on Sony 6800, BVU 110, Sony 3M camera & the 5000 series & 2000 series w/ 440 controller. Deadline: Oct. 1, 1985. Send resume, sample of work on ¾" tape, 3 references w/ addresses & numbers, & a cover letter specifying teaching experience & working philosophy to: Barbara Sykes-Dietze, Video Coordinator, Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605.

● *TOLL FREE JOB LINE* introduced by CPB. Prerecorded information on current public broadcasting positions offered 24 hrs./day. Outside Washington, DC, (800) 582-8220. Job seekers & public broadcasting stations can use job line to advertise or seek information on opportunities at no cost. To list openings, contact: Yoko Arthur, EEO Programs Manager, Human Resources Development, (202) 955-5155.

● *PRODUCER NEEDED* to put together financing for story of Mario Lanza or other singer-related story. Voice & soundtracks available. Songs already recorded. Can obtain rights to book on Lanza's life for TV or movie. Contact: John Amato, 41 Calvert Ave., Commack, NY 11725, (516) 462-9547.

● *GAFFER WANTED:* Camera crew w/ ¾" gear looking for film gaffer interested in developing video lighting skills. Paid & spec work. Send resume to: Imagelink Prods., 355 W. 85th St., Apt. 61, NYC 10024.

● *INTERNSHIPS: Afterimage,* the monthly newspaper/journal of photography, independent film, video & artists' books is currently accepting applications for internships beginning fall 1985. A variety of editorial & production positions available. Contact: David Trend, managing editor, (716) 442-8676.

Publications

● *BEST-SELLING HANDBOOKS FOR BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS:* Titles include *The Corporate Scriptwriting Book* ($14.95), *The Video Production Guide* ($28.95), *The Handbook of Private Television* ($74.95), *Organizational TV News* ($16.95), plus more. Communicom Publishing Company distributes these books & also offers scriptwriting workshops & script critique service. Contact: Communicom, 548 NE 43rd Ave., Portland, OR 97213, (503) 239-5141.

● *SO YOU WANT TO MAKE A LIVING?* Audio

cassette & transcript now available from NY Women in Film's Spring Young Professionals Seminar. Staff positions in film & TV discussed by prominent women in the fields. Send check for $10 for 90 min. cassette ($9 WIF members), $6 for transcript ($5 WIF members), or $15 for both ($14 WIF members) to: NY Women in Film, 27 W. 20th St., #1203, NYC 10011, (212) 206-8555.

● *SCENE TECHNOLOGY* is a college-level text on current technical practices of constructing, painting, assembling, rigging & shifting scenery for the performing arts, written by Northern Illinois University professor of theater arts Richard L. Arnold. The illustrated book deals w/ scenery in all media, including live theater, TV, dance, opera, etc. Contact: Prentice-Hall, Inc., College Division, Rte. 9, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632.

● *FOUNDATION GRANTS INDEX ANNUAL, 14th EDITION* identifies funding priorities of the nation's largest foundations. The largest index ever, it covers over 34,000 grants of $5,000 or more reported to The Foundation Center by 460 foundations. These grants, valued at over $1.6 billion, represent almost 40% of total grant dollars awarded by private foundations in 1984. $44 paperbound. Contact: Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave. & 16th St., NYC 10003, (212) 620-4230.

● *OREGON GUIDE TO MEDIA SERVICES:* Published by the Media Project, this is the latest directory of Oregon's film, video & related media businesses. Categories include cinematographers, distributors, editing services, producers, screening rooms, transportation, writers. Send $9 plus $1 postage & handling to: Media Project, 925 NW 19th, Portland, OR 97209, (503) 223-5335.

Resources ● Funds

● *DOCTORS FOR ARTISTS:* A nonprofit doctor referral service to aid performing & visual artists, offers artists a 20% discount on medical services. Doctors for Artists has members in all parts of NY in many specialties; a referral operator is on call from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact: Doctors for Artists, 123 W. 79th St., NYC 10024, (212) 496-5172.

● *PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY:* Individual & group counselling to independent artists & freelancers in NYC Village area. Highly trained w/years of experience. Specializes in problems of interpersonal relationships, artistic careers, rearing of young children. Reduced rates for AIVF members. Contact: Judith Smith, CSW, (212) 691-6695, NYC.

● *COMING OUT WEST?* NY Indies planning to shoot in Northern California or the San Francisco Bay Area can save time & money by contacting AIVF member Karil Daniels to coordinate the most effective, least expensive shoot possible. Over 10 years experience working in/with the SF indie film & video community. Contacts to quality freelance crew members, locations, equipment, services & supplies, at best rates. Contact: Karil Daniels, Point of View Prods., 2477 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94110, (415) 821-0435.

● *KEY LIGHT PRODUCTIONS* provides complete production services from project development & shooting through editing. Social-service media specialty. Full support staff w/ field producer, writers, researchers, PAs, crew as needed. Broadcast equipment, rates negotiable. Contact: Beth, (212) 581-9748, or Lauren, (212) 989-8157, NYC.

● *FILM SOUND STAGE:* Negotiable rates. Contact: Brian Sullivan, Midtown Studio, 35 W. 31st St., NYC 10001, (212) 564-9405.

● *CPB PROGRAM FUND DEADLINE* for proposal submission for round one of FY 1986 Open Solicitation is Sept. 6. Contact: CPB Program Fund, (202) 955-5138, DC.

● *POSTPRODUCTION CONSULTING & EDITING* for all aspects of 16mm & 35mm film. Experienced in solving problems w/ opticals, lab procedures, archival footage, film-to-tape transfers, etc. Credits include postproduction supervisor of PBS series, technical consultant to film archives, editor of productions using archival material. Steve,(718) 624-4142, NYC.

● *WRITERS & PRODUCERS:* Seeking evaluations, sales, development deals, or top agency representation? Contact: Flaming Rose Prods., 770 Princeton Ave., Metedeconk, NJ 08724, (201) 892-5552.

● *$15,000 WINDSOR TOTAL VIDEO SCHOLARSHIP:* Center for the Media Arts will award a new Media Arts Foundation scholarship in the fall. Scholarship will assist students who demonstrate financial need, & who have exemplary talent, acumen & motivation to succeed in the media world. Contact: Windsor Total Video, 565 Fifth Ave., NYC 10017, (212) 725-8080.

● *NEA DEADLINES:* Design Fellowships, Sept. 10; Design Arts, Sept. 10; Literary Publishing, Sept. 13; AFI Independent Filmmaker Program, Sept. 13; New American Works, Producers, Special Projects, Sept 13; Letter of Intent for Programming in the Arts, Sept. 30; Conservation, Collection Maintenance, Sept. 30; Training/Recording Centers, Sept. 30; Opera-Musical Theater, Sept. 30; Artist Residency Grants, Oct. 1; Design Exploration/Research, Oct. 10.

● *1985 WHITNEY BIENNIAL FILM/VIDEO EXHIBITION,* together with the American Federation of Arts, now offers the film & video components of the 1985 Biennial, a survey of contemporary art consisting of films & videotapes produced during the previous two years. The 31 pieces are offered separately or together & include works from Lizzie Borden, Larry Gottheim, Erika Beckman, Lynne Tillman, *et al.* The exhibition will continue to tour & will reach approximately 35 sites in the US, Canada, & abroad. Contact: American Federation of Arts, 41 E. 65th St., NYC 10021, (212) 988-7700.

● *NEW CINEMA* features interviews w/ independent filmmakers present at the 11th Annual Montreal Int'l Festival of New Cinema, & includes discussions ranging from personal approaches to filmmaking to broader attempts to define the nature of film. Filmmakers include Charles Ahearn, Emile de Antonio, Les Blank, Doris Chase, Michael Oblowitz, Werner Schroeter, *et al.* Rental, $95, purchase, $595. Contact: Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, NYC 10019, (212) 246-5522.

● *FILMS ON MEDIA STUDIES: Six O'Clock and All's Well:* behind the scenes at the top-rated local news program in NYC; film or video; rental, $90; purchase, 16mm $800, video $600. *For the First Time:* the amazement of adults & children in a village in the Cuban mountains as they view a film for the first time; Spanish dialogue w/ English subtitles; rental, $35; purchase, $175. *Reporters:* a look at the lives of Parisian photojournalists, the paparazzi; French dialogue w/ English subtitles; rental, $150. For further info or a complete catalog, contact: Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, NYC 10019, (212) 246-5522.

● *INTERNATIONAL INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS SOCIETY* now has a NY chapter. IICS, founded in 1982, provides a forum for the exchange of ideas & information promoting the use of interactive media. Organization activities include workshops, special events, programs, an on-line electronic bulletin board, & a newsletter. Membership for individual, $50, student $25, & corporate $500. Contact: IICS, c/o Video Management, Inc., 565 Fifth Ave., NYC 10017.

Trims ● Glitches

● *KUDOS* to AIVF member Michael Durbin, whose short film, *Dancer,* will receive a Golden Eagle Award from the Council on Int'l Nontheatrical Events in a ceremony in Washington, DC, in December. Durbin's film was recently purchased by Home Box Office.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Karen Ishizuka & Robert Nakamura, coproducers of *Fools' Dance,* which received a national media award from the Retirement Research Fndn. Their film will be shown on the PBS *Silk Screen* series this fall.

● *BEST OF LUCK* to Robert Epstein's & Richard Schmiechen's *The Times of Harvey Milk,* CPB's US public TV Documentary entry in the 37th annual Prix Italia competition to be held in Sept. Oscar is watching.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Mark Mori, a $1,000 grant winner of Appalshop's Southeast Media Fellowship program for his documentary *Building Bombs.*

● *KUDOS* to AIVF member Sherry Millner, who was one of the 5 finalists in the Long Beach Museum of Art's Open Channels competition. Together with Group W, Fullerton, Millner will receive $1,000, a case of videotape & technical assistance to produce an original video work.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Dan Klugher & Altana Films, whose documentary film project *The Muriel Gardiner Story* was awarded a $40,000 media grant from the NJ Committee for the Humanities. The Committee also awarded $20,000 to the NY Center for Visual History & project director Jill Janows for *William Carlos Williams: Against the Grain.*

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to AIVF member Stanley J. Orzel's *Child's Play* for taking 2nd prize in JVC's Professional Video Competition.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Leslie Thornton for her $3,000 fellowship awarded by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to NEA Media Arts Film/Video production grant winners: Liza Bear, Joel DeMott & Jeff Kreines, Michelle Citron, Stevenson Palfi, Peter D'Agostino, Julie Dash, Howard Dratch, Emily Hubley, Joan Jonas, Jon Jost, Ardele Lister, Ed Bowes, Matthew Geller, Coleen Higgins & Ghasem Ebrahimian, Errol Morris, Bill Stephens, Charles Ahearn & Michael Smith, Yvonne Rainer, Edin Velez, Doug Hall, Mario Williams, Norman Yonemoto.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Matthew Geller, the Daniel Wadsworth Memorial Video Festival grand prize winner of $750 and $750 worth of equipment access for his tape, *Everglades City.* Doris Chase took a special merit award in the festival for *Thulani.*

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Bulldog Film & Video Inc. & to Michael Di Lauro, director & cinematographer of *The Family Caring,* which won a Blue Ribbon at the American Film Festival.

AIVF THANKS . . .

Jane Alexander, Ruben Blades, Joe Morton, Nam June Paik, B. Ruby Rich, and Irwin Young for serving as awards presenters at the Indie Awards Ceremony on June 4, and Byeager Blackwell for stage-managing the event. Also, a very special thank you to all the AIVF members and friends who took tickets, handed out programs, served food, cleaned up, directed traffic, and generally made it possible for the 10th Anniversary Celebration to run smoothly.

CORRECTIONS

Martha Rosler's name was inadvertently dropped from the list of fellowship winners of 1985 New York Foundation for the Arts artists' fellowships published in the May *Independent*. We apologize for the omission.

On page eight of the July/August issue of *The Independent*, Louise Lo's affiliation with the National Asian American Telecommunications Association was unclear, due to a printing error. And several sentences on page 11 were likewise obscured. These should have read: "And already in the pipeline are partially-completed projects that illustrate CAT's predilection for video art's sort-of famous names: Dara Birnbaum, Bill Viola, Doug Hall, Ken Fiengold, William Wegman, and Michael Smith.

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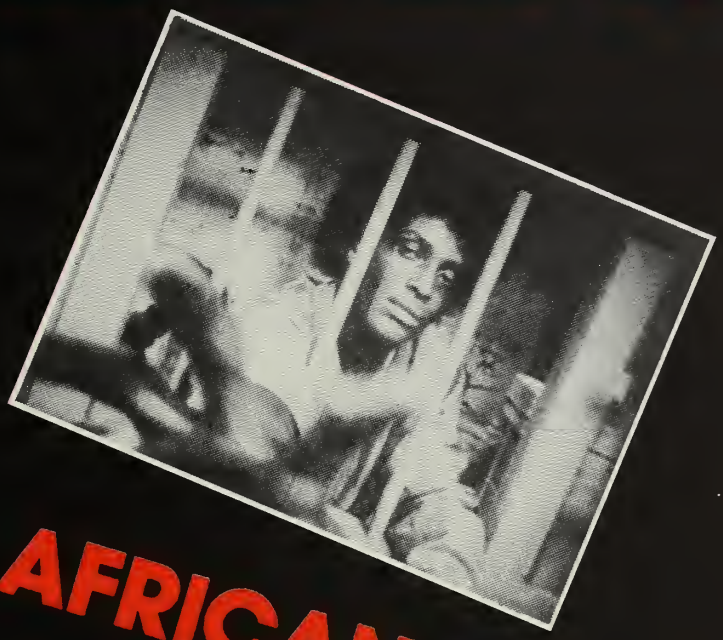
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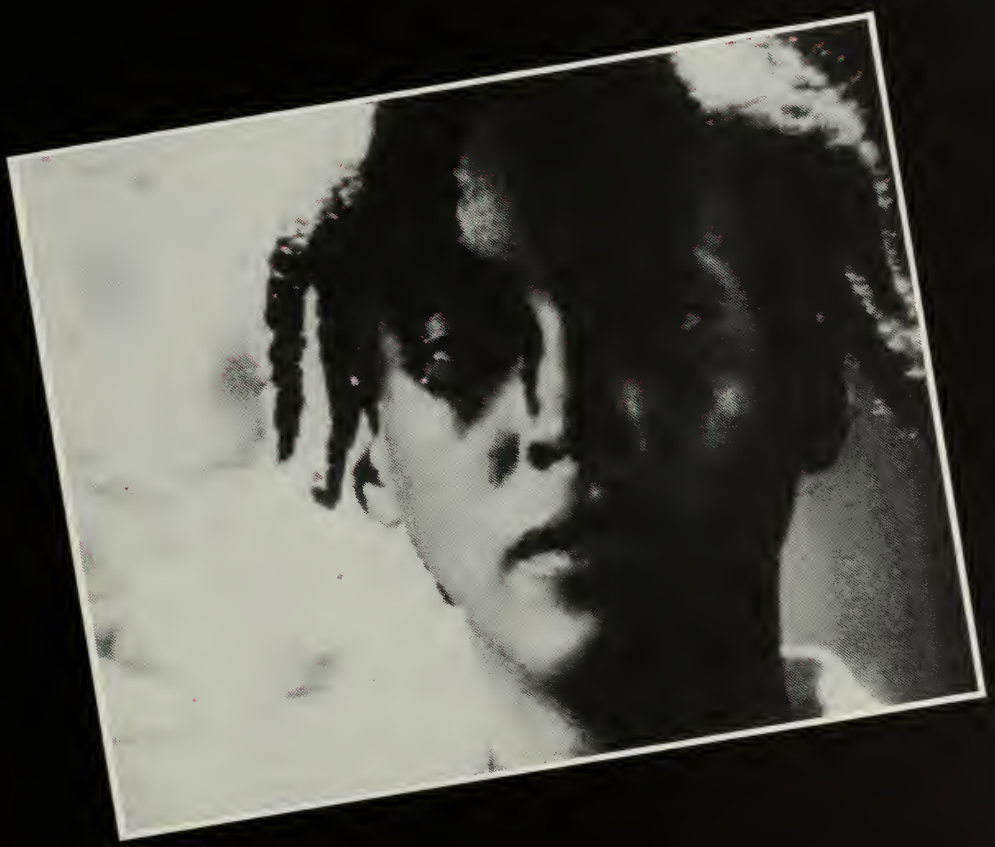
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VOLUME 8, NUMBER 8

Publisher: Lawrence Sapadin
Editor: Martha Gever
Associate Editors: Debra Goldman, Renee Tajima
Contributing Editors: Robert Aaronson, Bob Brodsky, Lucinda Furlong, Mary Guzzy, Fenton Johnson, David Leitner, Tani Treadway
Editorial Assistants: Michelle Elliott, Claudia Gomez
Art Director: Bethany Eden Jacobson
Advertising: Barbara Spence; Marionette, Inc. (718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBoer 113 E. Center St., Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeezo Typography
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a not-for-profit, tax-exempt educational foundation dedicated to the promotion of video and film, and by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc. (AIVF), the national trade association of independent producers and individuals involved in independent video and film. Subscription is included with membership in AIVF. Together, FIVF and AIVF provide a broad range of educational and professional services for independents and the general public. Publication of **The Independent** is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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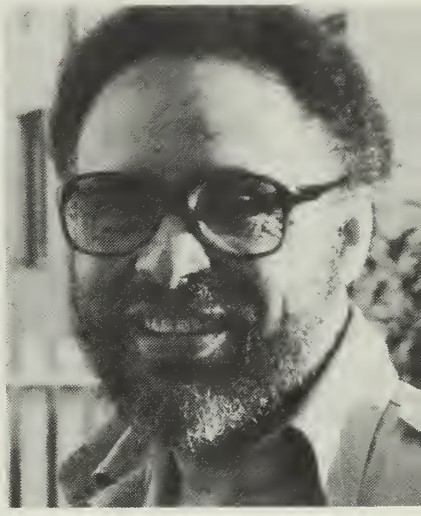
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COVER: Individuals confrant the forces af sacial exploitatian in filmmaker Haile Gerima's "Bushmama" and "Child of Resistance." In "Storyteller of Struggles," Gerima talks to Rob Edelman abaut the influences on his narrative style and his vision of an independent Third Warld cinema.

LETTERS

FAULT LINES

To the editor:

As director and co-producer of *Chords of Fame,* I was puzzled that, in David Riker's article "Are Missile Movies on Target?" [July/August 1985], Phil Rosenthal of Almi Classics called the run of *In Our Hands* at the Film Forum in New York City "'a disaster'. . . as it was paired on a double bill with *Chords of Fame.*" Those of us who worked on *Chords* were rather pleased with the exposure our film received as well as with the financial return on the double bill. Also, the staff at Film Forum felt that the two week run went well and that the general response was quite good. In fact, *Chords of Fame* recently aired nationally in Great Britain on Channel Four and continues to do nicely in distribution by Horizon Releasing.

For a distributor to blame lack of interest in a film he is promoting on the film it played with is, to put it mildly, a cheap shot. I think *In Our Hands* is a fine film, but censuring others for its lack of success does nothing to either help the filmmakers or alleviate the problems the distributor faces.

—Michael Korolenko
Brooklyn, New York

SEPARATE BUT EQUAL

To the editor:

In the July/August "In Brief" column, the listing for the Film Arts Festival claimed that the event was "formerly known as the Bay Area Filmmakers Showcase." There is, in fact, no connection between the two events.

As your entry noted, in 1984 the Film Arts Foundation declined to co-present the Showcase with the San Francisco International Film Festival. That decision, however, was not, as *The Independent* observed, "due to a falling out between the two organizations." On the contrary, FAF applauded the festival's initiative in incorporating the Showcase within the body of the international festival. In this new format, the Showcase proved very successful in attracting attention to the work of Bay Area independents, not only from the local filmmaking community, but from substantial numbers of international visitors. Far from experiencing a "falling out," FAF and the festival worked closely throughout the preparation of the Showcase. Having offered logistical support and cooperation in publicizing the event, FAF shared the festival's gratification at its unprecedented success.

FAF's upcoming Film Arts Festival is not intended to compete with or replace the Showcase. We feel that more than a single such event is necessary to increase public awareness of the Bay Area's growing community of independent filmmakers. The Film Arts Festival, a non-juried selection that will juxtapose new films with notable works from the past, is an attempt to answer that need.

—Peter Scarlet
Artistic Director, San Francisco Film Festival
—Gail Silva
Director, Film Arts Foundation
San Francisco, California

A HOUSE DIVIDED

To the editor:

In Debra Goldman's report on the appointment of Elizabeth Wetzel as executive director of the IFP in New York [July/August 1985], she states that the "IFP is bicoastal" with New York and Los Angeles offices and a board "which oversees both organizations." This is incorrect.

Since 1983, when we committed ourselves to providing year-round services for our membership, the IFP/West has been legally separate from the IFP in New York. The operations, finances, and long-term planning of the IFP/West are determined solely by its own board of directors. Goldman also referred to IFP's plans for regional expansion. Please note that a San Francisco organization is currently being established, but under the auspices of IFP/West.

The two organizations maintain regular communications to encourage cooperation on individual and joint projects and reciprocity of membership benefits. While our common goal is to promote the independent film movement, the IFP/West and the IFP remain autonomous organizations.

—Lynette Mathis
Executive Director, IFP/West
Los Angeles, California

Debra Goldman replies:

Aware that many members of the independent community have long been confused about the relationship between the New York IFP and IFP/West, I was very specific in my questions to Wetzel on the subject. My account of that relationship was culled directly from her answers. In light of Mathis's correction, one wonders whether the discrepancies stem from misunderstanding or perhaps have a more complex political origin. The New York IFP appears to be in turmoil [see "Media Clips" in this issue]; an internal clarification of the relationship between the two groups may help put their house in order.

CP BEEFS

To the editor:

Claudia Gomez's article, "CPB Training Grants Derailed" [July/August 1985] is filled with factual errors and misinformation that need correction and clarification.

CPB has not "derailed" its training programs. Fiscal constraints throughout the Corporation prevent CPB from continuing its 1984 support levels for training programs. To do so would jeopardize other key areas in need of support. No programs, however, have been eliminated.

The reduction of CPB appropriations for fiscal years 1984, 1985, and 1986 were passed in 1981. At that time, CPB evaluated each training project and concentrated its resources on training that was crucial to the future of public broadcasting, while attempting to develop a comprehensive national training system. During the past three fiscal years, funding for most projects has declined slowly while contributions from stations and participants have increased. Through cost-saving measures taken between FY 1981 and FY 1984, CPB has been able to carry small amounts of training funds forward each year. No funds are expected to be carried forward from FY 1985 into FY 1986 since all available funds must be applied to FY 1985's crucial training needs. Consequently, CPB has been unable to fully support every training program in 1985 and 1986. When funds are not available to support cost-effective training, some projects may be suspended until additional resources become available. This does not mean, however, that the programs have been eliminated.

The Corporation regularly consults with various segments of the public broadcasting system that deliver and receive training. CPB funding decisions on training are based primarily on needs expressed by those broadcasters. When limited funds make it impossible for CPB to support every expressed need, CPB tries to provide as much training as possible to all public broadcasters.

The assertion that "with the decrease in grant funds, past recipients of the grants will have to discontinue their training programs or seek alternative funding sources" is completely false. All training grants awarded, including those issued in FY 1985 and 1986, will be paid by the Corporation. A reduction in the total dollar amount of training grants does not preclude CPB from carrying out its financial commitment under existing, or future grants awarded.

Gomez's claims about reductions in "affirmative action grants" is, likewise, erroneous. The Corporation does not award "affirmative action grants" for training, nor any of its grants programs.

Finally, her conclusion, "in the future, training grants will be awarded based on the number of applications and the amount of funds. However, with applications rising and funds declining, it's likely that far fewer minorities and women will be trained," is begging the question. All training grants, including those awarded in the past, are awarded based on the availablity of funds and the number of competitive applications received. It is true that the number of applications has increased, as has the quality. Rarely, however, have all applications received been competitive. Further, with the decline in the level of funds available for training grants it is probable, though not certain, that fewer people (minority, nonminority, women, and men) will be trained. For example, expected number of persons receiving training in 1985 will exceed the number trained in 1984 when funds were at a higher level, thanks to teleconferencing to provide marketing training, and to the increased numbers of persons trained in CPB's In-Service Training Grants project. If teleconferencing is again used in fiscal year 1986, the number of individuals trained will probably at least equal those trained in 1985. On the other hand, if teleconferencing is not used, the number of persons trained may fall between the FY 1984 and 1985 levels.

Since passage of the 1981 legislation, CPB has had limited discretion over its appropriation. It allocates funds as wisely as possible, consistent with the Public Broadcasting Act and the needs of the public broadcasting system. Training programs receive every consideration along with the many other demands placed

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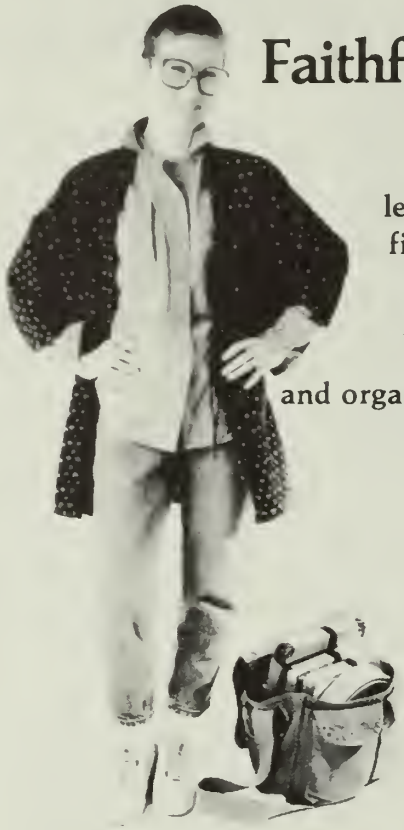
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on the CPB budget. We will continue to meet the system's training needs as funds and stated priorities allow.

—Ronald E. Weber
Vice President, Corporate Communications
Corporation for Public Broadcasting
Washington, D.C.

Claudia Gomez replies:

Weber presumes to "correct" errors in my article, when in fact he merely imposes his own misinterpretations. "Derail" does not mean to terminate or eliminate, but rather to throw off course. Certainly a cut of $460,000 in funding qualifies for such a description. Nowhere did I state the the Corporation eliminated the Minority and Women's Training Grants.

Weber also chides me for "begging the question" because I made the elementary deduction that the number of grant recipients would decrease in line with the cuts in the program budget. However, he too concludes that "it is probable, though not certain, that fewer people. . . will be trained."

Tom Fuller, deputy director of CPB's Human Resources Department and my source at CPB, did not mention the use of teleconferencing; if he had I would have included that information. But Weber begs the question when he suggests that teleconferencing will compensate for such a large budget cut. What aspect of the training program does teleconferencing serve? Under what conditions will it again be used in 1986? Teleconferencing may improve the numbers of the training grants program, but how does it affect its substance?

Finally, I find it curious that Weber balks at my use of the label "affirmative action" for the program. In the Reagan era, previous efforts to counteract job discrimination are being consistently undermined. It's no surprise that CPB now disowns the phrase, no matter how appropriate it may be. However, it is disheartening to find that this attitude has even infected CPB's Human Resources Department as represented by Weber.

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MUST-CARRY TO GO: COURT DECLARES RULE UNCONSTITUTIONAL

In a decision that demolishes the cornerstone of the Federal Communications Commission's cable regulatory policy, a three judge panel in Washington declared the FCC's must-carry rule, mandating cable carriage of all local broadcast signals, unconstitutional. The landmark July 19 ruling held that, as written, the rules do not meet the requirements of the First Amendment. In his opinion Judge J. Skelly Wright wrote, "In light of cable's virtually unlimited channel capacity, the standard of First Amendment review reserved for occupants of the physically scarce airwaves is plainly inapplicable."

The two cases at issue were brought by Quincy Cable TV, Inc., seeking reversal of a $5,000 fine levied for refusing to carry two local broadcast signals, and by Turner Broadcasting System, appealing the FCC's refusal to initiate rule-making to delete must-carry rules. The court panel concluded that although "'incidental' burdens of speech"—those that advance governmental interests without protecting or suppressing a particular set of ideas—are permissible, the must-carry "rules coerce speech; they require the operator to carry signals of local broadcasters regardless of their content and irrespective of whether the operator considers them appropriate programming for the community it serves."

The First Amendment issue makes the *Quincy* decision significant for those who play no part in the internecine war between broadcast and cable TV. James Mooney of the National Cable Television Association called the court decision "a grand slam ruling" toward the establishment of cable as a First Amendment speaker. Mooney could be reminded, however, there are important innings in this game still to be played. While the First Amendment has been cited in several recent pro-cable decisions, Michael Meyerson, assistant professor at the University of Baltimore School of Law, pointed out there are three equally important rulings on the books that uphold cable regulation in the face of a First Amendment challenge. A Rhode Island Supreme Court decision declared public access requirements constitutional, although that ruling is now being appealed in the First Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals. A Tenth Circuit decision characterized franchise regulation as "reasonable," and in a Fifth Circuit case, the presiding judge declared that cable was a natural monopoly and could be treated like one. However, Meyerson added, "It wouldn't matter if *all* 11 circuits said cable had First Amendment rights. It doesn't mean anything until the Supreme Court tells us what the law is."

Quincy was an embarrassment for the FCC. The court not only chided the commission for failing to adequately justify its rules, but also threw many of the FCC's deregulatory arguments back in its face. The panel left open the possibility that the FCC could redraft the rules in a manner more sensitive to the First Amendment. Unfortunately, commented Peter Fannon, president of the National Association of Public Television Stations, "The FCC has decided to punt on this one." The Commission subsequently declined to attempt a new version of the rules.

Stunned broadcasters quickly regrouped to plan a counterstrategy. On August 20 the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Association of Broadcasters, and other broadcast groups filed a motion for a stay with the district court, announcing their intention to appeal the case, either before the full district court or the Supreme Court. Simultaneously, the broadcasters' sophisticated lobbying machinery went into high gear; within weeks of the decision, bills designed to implement the must-carry rules as law were introduced in both congressional houses. Any legislation would, of course, be subject to the same constitutional tests as the FCC regulations. While Fannon believed, "A political solution" to the must-carry situation was "not out of the question," he added, "There are good reasons to ask the Supreme Court to review the case. Only they can make the proper determination as to the First Amendment question [raised by *Quincy*]."

Broadcasters' biggest gun, however, is the compulsory copyright license that puts limits on the royalties cable pays to carry broadcast programming. The nominal payments dictated by the license were considered fair, because cable operators had no choice about the broadcast programming they carried. Now that operators have the option to drop unwanted signals and program only those stations considered valuable, broadcasters feel they should pay fees that reflect that value.

Although jubilant over the court ruling, the cable industry is not eager to start a war with the broadcast community. In their public comments, industry representatives have underplayed the decision's practical impact on broadcasters. They claim that viewers can purchase inexpensive A/B switches that allow subscribers to switch back and forth between cable and off-air signals, a point noted by Judge Wright in his opinion. (Switches, however, are of little use to urbanites living in densely-packed high-rises or to subscribers in rural areas who need cable to receive any television signals at all.) Operators also insist that no station that draws an audience should fear being bumped, although those same stations now may have to pay for the privilege of carriage. This could mean that broadcasters in suburban areas served by many contiguous systems will have to negotiate with dozens of individual operators. That burden, NAB president Edward Fritts told *Broadcasting,* could make the operation of smaller UHF stations economically unfeasible.

In the post-must-carry landscape, noncommercial UHF stations are probably in greatest jeopardy, and Fannon of NAPTS reported that national public television institutions are working with other broadcast groups to mount an attack. In preparation, NAPTS is gathering up-to-date information on the relationship between PTV and cable. Seven thousand cable systems carry at least one PTV station, and a number deliver multiple noncommercial signals. "It is hard to conceive that any one public television outlet can fulfill all the demands and interests of a single community," Fannon said. "Certainly, no one considers one commercial station sufficient." Yet it is precisely these secondary and tertiary PTV outlets that cable operators would like to drop from their systems to make room for made-for-cable programming. These stations also have less ability to pay for preserving space on the cable dial. One positive side effect of the decision, however, is that it will probably lay to rest the notion of the FCC expediting VHF-UHF station swaps between noncommercial and commercial licensees [see "Private Partners and Station Swapping," *The Independent,* May 1985].

Public access advocates can take some comfort in the fact that *Quincy* cannot be applied to access provisions. Judge Wright was careful to distinguish must-carry rules from access rules "which serve countervailing First Amendment values by providing a forum for public or governmental authorities." The biggest threat *Quincy* poses to the franchising process, Meyerson observed, was not its legal substance, but that, thanks to the industry hype, "cities may be intimated by more knowledgeable industry lawyers."

—Debra Goldman

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RIVERA RESIGNS FROM FCC

Henry Rivera, who was often a lone wolf on the Federal Communications Commission, resigned on September 15 to practice communications law at the Washington, D.C., firm of Dow, Lohnes and Albertson. Appointed to the FCC four years ago, Rivera was the only minority representative on the five-member commission, and quite often provided the only dissenting voice. Although generally supportive of the agency's move to deregulate the communications industry, Rivera was a steadfast protector of Equal Employment Opportunity enforcement, affirmative action policies, and the government's increased role in children's television programming. Says Wilhemina Reuben Cooke, executive director of the Washington-based Citizen's Communications Center at the Institute for Public Representation, "Rivera hasn't been one to cling to regulation for the sake of regulation, but he's been concerned with providing a safety net, and asking hard, searching questions about the responsibilities of the agency."

Rivera's departure will probably have little effect on the way the commission votes. But his written dissents and evaluations of cases have often provided Cooke and other citizens' advocates with a stepping stone for taking cases to appelate review, and he forced full debate on matters pending before the commision. During his term, Rivera successfully blocked efforts to relax EEO enforcement and was able to get minority preference in lotteries for multichannel, multi-point distribution service.

There are no immediate prospects for a Reagan-appointed replacement for Rivera. Bill Russell, the director of congressional and public affairs at the FCC, stated that the appointment process may take until the end of 1985.

—Renee Tajima

NAIROBI UPLINK

Most of us don't know very much about the U.N. Decade for Women conference, held in Nairobi, Kenya, from July 10–26, thanks to the cursory and often sexist coverage it received in the U.S. press. But while the event was frequently relegated to the "style" section of many major dailies, there were two alternative sources of information: the Women's International News Service and a pair of live satellite teleconferences between Nairobi and the U.S. Both projects were initiated by the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, an association of women media professionals founded in 1973.

With funding from the Skaggs Foundation in San Francisco—and a lot of volunteer labor—WINS functioned much like AP or UPI. A team of correspondents headed by Susanna Downie in Nairobi sent reports via computer to WINS headquarters in Terre Haute, Indiana. There they were edited and dispatched to subscribers by Susan Kaufman, head of the WINS "home team," who is also city editor of the *Terre Haute Tribune Star.* Reports ranged from hard news on the official U.N. proceedings to stories on the Non-Government Forum, an unofficial group of meetings and workshops that drew thousands of conferees. The service, picked up by the *San Francisco Examiner,* the *Pittsburgh Press,* and other newspapers, also offered specialized articles on delegates from each subscribing newspaper's circulation area.

WINS also established a monitoring project to gather and analyze the content of the conference coverage in print, radio, and television. Monitoring forms were distributed internationally and the resulting data base will be available to libraries.

Anyone with a cable hook-up in Boston, New York City, or Washington, D.C. was able to watch the two live teleconferences that took place on July 7 and 24. The events were organized for the WIFP by Lillian Levy, the public information officer at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Levy, who arranged a teleconference for the 1980 Mid-Decade U.N. women's conference in Copenhagen involving five PBS stations, obtained free satellite time through Intelsat's Project Share. RCA Americom provided a free audio feed from the U.S. Other support was provided by COMSAT, the U.S. Information Agency, the Communications Workers of America, and various individuals.

Studio audience members and panelists in each of the three cities were allotted time to ask questions of the delegates in Nairobi, who had been selected by Levy. These included women from India, Pakistan, China, Thailand, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Finland, New Zealand, Chile, Canada, and Kenya. The public access channels in the cities handled the technical set-ups locally, and also worked with various groups to select panelists.

Predictably, Third World women identified health care, starvation, and illiteracy as the most pressing problems, while women from developed countries focused on economic issues and political power. Despite their varying concerns and political differences—for instance, the potential confrontation between Israeli and Egyptian delegates—Levy said the panelists were "not at all contentious; they were all interested in getting across."

Although both projects experienced technical problems, each demonstrated the power of collective effort in realizing the democratic potential of communications.

—Lucinda Furlong

Lucinda Furlong is curatorial assistant at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

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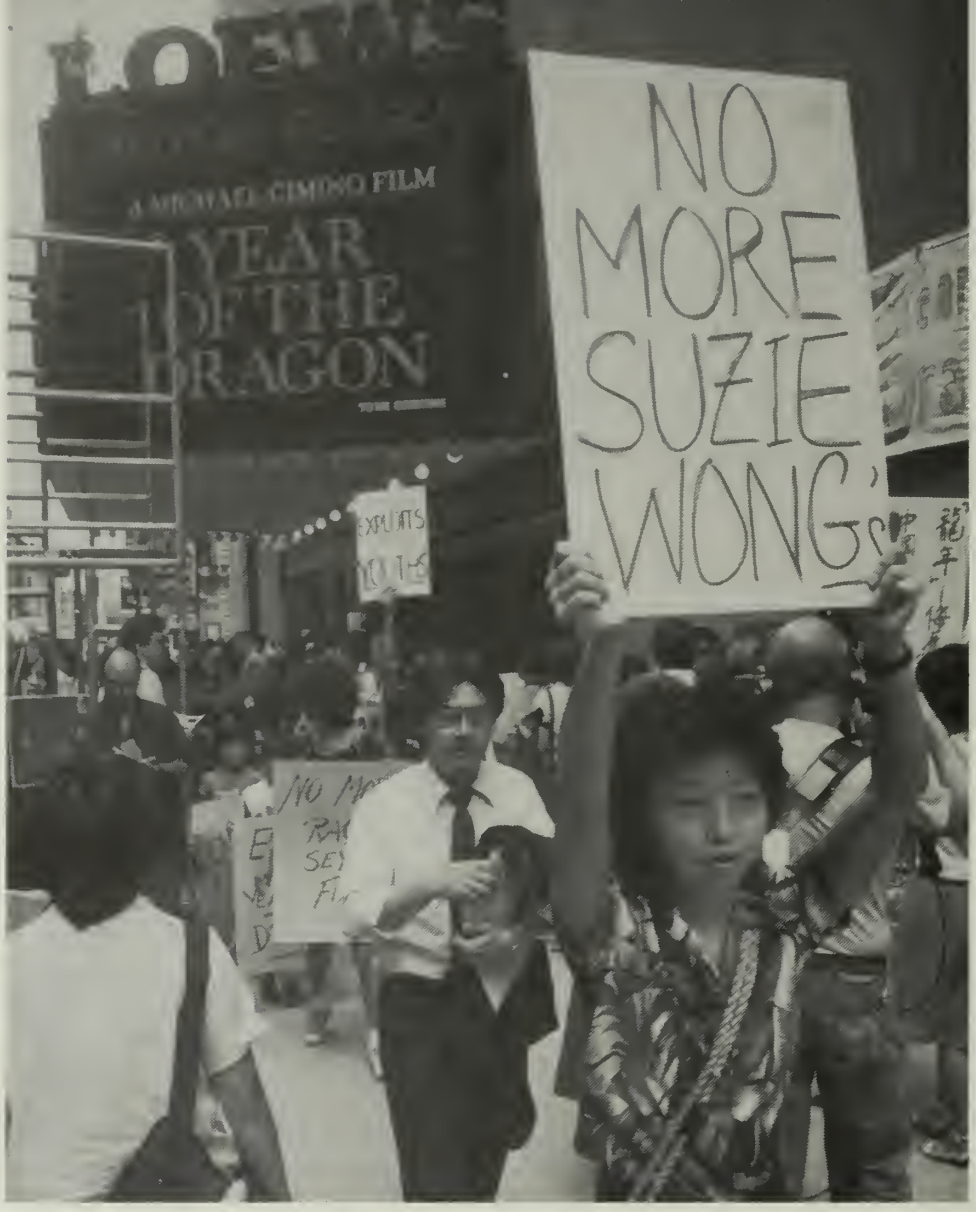
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DRAGON BUSTERS

Racism, sexism, and extreme violence are so common in the movie fare cranked out by the U.S. film industry that making a fuss can seem trite. Sometimes, though, these persistent themes of modern mythology are celebrated at the expense of an entire community. And sometimes that community publicly objects. In recent years *Fort Apache: The Bronx* provoked angry responses from the Puerto Rican community, portrayed in the movie as violent barbarians. When William Friedkin brought a crew to New York City to shoot *Cruising,* his tale of murder in the gay S&M subculture, the gay community disrupted the filmmaking. Femininists took multiple actions against *Snuff*....

On August 16 MGM-UA released *Year of the Dragon*—directed by Michael Cimino, produced by Dino De Laurentiis, and starring Mickey Rourke—in theaters across the county. The same day, Asian American groups picketed, distributed information, and held press conferences in New York City and San Francisco, denouncing the film's depiction of New York's Chinatown as a hotbed of corruption and crime and its characters as insidious stereotypes. At Loew's Astor Plaza in Times Square, over 200 people demonstrated and announced a boycott. The protest's organizers, a coalition of about a dozen groups—including the Organization of Chinese Americans, the National Asian American Telecommunications Association, the Chinese Benevolent Association, ILGWU Local 23-25, Third World Newsreel/Camera News and other media groups—linked the movie with increased anti-Asian violence in the U.S. and other anti-Asian box office hits like *Rambo* and Cimino's earlier success *The Deer Hunter.*



Protests against "Year of the Dragon," like this opening day demonstration by 200 members of New York's Chinese community, won rare concessions from distributor MGM-UA.
Photo: Corky Lee

Quoted in *Daily Variety,* MGM-UA countered that "claims made against the film...and its makers are without validity." In an interview with Tom Buckley in *Harper's,* Cimino explained that his films are portraits of Vietnam vets he knew as a Green Beret in 1968. But a coalition spokesperson who consulted the Pentagon traced Cimino's military career to a six-month hitch he served in 1962 at Fort Dix and Fort Sam Houston—well before U.S. soldiers were sent *en masse* to fight in Southeast Asia.

While the distributor defended its product with denials and the director rewrote his autobiography, Robert Daley, author of the novel *Year of the Dragon,* issued a statement condemning the cinematic version of his work: "I deplore the violence and racism in the film....I tried to show that the Chinese were as good as any other human beings, who suffer, and care, and bleed like anyone else....This portrayal is horrible."

The Coalition Against Year of the Dragon cites the consistent use of racial slurs in the movie as evidence of its racism. At one point, the cop/hero, appropriately named Stanley White, describes Chinatown residents as "snot-nosed Chinks, scumbags." As for Chinese culture: "The mafia concept...it's Chinese." His job, as he sees it, is to "hit Chinatown like Genghis Khan...to turn Chinatown upside down.... This is a fucking war...like Vietnam all over again."

In addition to the narrow view of Chinatown as an underworld stronghold controlled by Tong bosses and youth gangs, *Year of the Dragon* includes one major Black character, a henchman for Chinese heroin traders, referred to as "the yellow nigger." Tracy Tzu, the only sympathetic Asian character, played by the model Ariane, becomes the hero's lover even though he continually insults and abuses her. Ariane told the *New York Times* that she "decided to go into films because she was disappointed by the way Asians have been portrayed." But the boycott movement describes Tracy Tzu as "no more than a rehash of the old Suzie Wong formula."

In its sketchy report on the controversy, *Daily Variety* remarked, "Ironically, the production provided work for more Chinese actors than any American film in years." The participation of some prominent Chinese American actors did not escape notice by the Coalition Against.... Along with a boycott, they demanded, "MGM-UA and other studios should provide employment for Asian American actors in movies that portray Asians with accuracy and sensitivity.... The price of employment in this movie is the perpetration of destructive and demeaning stereotypes."

Advertised as "exciting," "exotic," and "adventurous," *Year of the Dragon* outperformed all other films during the first weekend of its run in Manhattan. Within a week following the premiere, however, the groups represented in the Coalition Against... numbered more than 50. Reports on the coalition's actions appeared in the *New York Times,* the *New York Post, Variety,* and were carried on local television news, as well as *Entertainment Tonight* and the

Cable News Network (owned by Ted Turner, who now controls MGM-UA). Demonstrations in San Francisco, Boston, Los Angeles, and Detroit as well as New York had taken place. August 24 was designated a national day of protest.

On that day 1,000 people rallied in San Francisco, the New York City press again covered local protests, and in L.A. a group marched down Sunset Boulevard, bearing a symbolic coffin which they burned in front of Grauman's Chinese Theater. The strategy worked. Within several days MGM-UA chair Frank Rothman notified Michael Woo, L.A.'s first and only Asian American council representative, that his company would issue a public apology to the Asian American community, agreeing to immediately produce and distribute a disclaimer to theaters showing *Year of the Dragon*. Rothman also told Woo he was willing to talk about hiring more Asian Americans and would consider supporting Asian American projects. Attacking the underside of the American Dream, the coalition proved that community-based, organized responses can be effective antidotes to popular media myths.

—Martha Gever

SPACE RACE IN GOTHAM

New York City's Collective for Living Cinema has recovered sufficiently from a summer housing crisis and the departure of executive director Theresa Weedy to schedule a full screening program for its fall season. However, the 13-year old theater and media center must find a new home before the end of the year, and has launched a fundraising drive to facilitate the move.

The Collective has long been a mainstay of alternative film and video screenings, with an intelligent programming philosophy that offered screenings for nearby Chinatown audiences as well as the downtown art crowd. But in early June, toward the end of the spring season, the city's Department of Consumer Affairs ordered the doors to the Collective padlocked, charging that the projection booth was not fireproof. That order was successfully appealed, but soon after, the city's Buildings Department paid a visit to the Collective. This time it was cited for having the wrong certificate of occupancy for the theater, which accommodated audiences of 150 or more. Before leaving the Collective in August, Weedy, with the help of board members, was able to arrange a six-month extension from the Buildings Department, with a reduced capacity of about 75 seats. But, because the cooperative owners of the 52 White Steet building that the Collective has occupied for 10 years declined a request to permanently amend the certificate of

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occupancy, the center must look for a new space. Weedy's predecessor Kate Flax will return as executive director in September, solving at least one major problem. And even in Manhattan's tight real estate market, the Collective is confident of finding a new home.

Perhaps the Collective has good reason to be optimistic. In relocations that seem to defy the ruthlessness of Manhattan's space race, Third World Newsreel and the Kitchen have moved *uptown* into *bigger* quarters. Third World Newsreel's new address is 335 W. 38th St., 5th floor, New York, NY 10018. The Kitchen has bought a six-story building at 512 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011, (212) 255-5793, including a refurbished 49 ft. by 75 ft. video production facility with a computerized lighting system that will be available for rental.

—RT

IFP'S REVOLVING DOOR

Soon after Elizabeth Wetzel was appointed executive director of the Independent Feature Project in New York last April, she announced optimistic plans for an expanded, national IFP. But in August, Wetzel and the organization parted company. About the same time, Shelby Stone, the new Independent Feature Market coordinator hired by Wetzel, left for Cinecom. As of September, a skeleton office remained, run by operations manager Rick Brooke, who had worked at IFP for a mere five months and planned to leave for a job at Telluride. The resulting vacuum in leadership and experience threatened the Independent Feature Market, the IFP's most important project, for the first time since its inception.

In a "back to the future" move, IFP founder Sandra Schulberg entered the scene to help IFP/NY's board find a solution to its structural and financial problems. Almost immediately, some major obstacles were overcome: IFP added five members to its board, veteran distributor and former head of United Artist's Classics division Sam Kitt was signed as market director, Eamonn Bowles was hired to assist him, and Schulberg raised enough money to set the market in motion. The seventh annual Market is slated for October 9–19. For the first time, all market activities will be held under one roof—at the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs's Huntington Hartford Building on Columbus Circle. Screenings will take place in the DCA theater, renovated since the technically disastrous showings there in 1982.

The IFP/NY board decided to postpone hiring any new staff until it completed an organizational overhaul. Schulberg, who resigned from the board last year, has returned as an unpaid,

untitled troubleshooter. She will undoubtedly lend credibility and continuity to IFP during the next months of crucial planning.

—RT

MOMA'S HARDWARE STORE

New York's Museum of Modern Art is the latest institutional beneficiary of state-of-the-art video equipment from the Sony Corporation of America. According to Keith Johnson, who is in charge of the Video Study Center at MOMA, the donation of hardware is large enough to fully equip the center. The gifts include six ¾" screening units, an editing suite with 1" and ¾" dubbing capability, and a word processor/microcomputer unit. A large screen projection system will be housed in the Titus II theater for public screenings.

The Video Study Center will not be open to the public, but will be accessible by appointment to artists, scholars, graduate students, and "anyone seriously involved in the field," explains Johnson. The new facility will also enable the center to become more involved in video distribution in conjunction with MOMA's video circulating library.

—RT

INDEPENDENTS ON THE AIR . . . TO BE CONTINUED

Even the handful of producers who receive money from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's Open Solicitation Fund have no assurance their programs will actually reach an audience. Carriage remains a roadblock for independents seeking a national television public. To facilitate greater communication between independents and those who set the Public Broadcasting System's broadcast schedule, CPB combined their regularly scheduled meetings with station representatives and the National Coalition of Public Broadcasting Producers on July 30. The group was joined by PBS representatives. Although the cordiality of the meeting surpassed expectations, the concrete results of the gathering drew mixed reviews from Coalition members.

To take advantage of the presence of the system's distributors, the Coalition narrowed its agenda to distribution issues and succeeded in securing two policy changes from PBS. At the urging of both independents and station reps, Suzanne Weil, PBS vice president of programming, agreed that producers should not have to pay the step-up costs of preparing a program for the air. Hereafter PBS will bear this expense, although the group simultaneously urged CPB to increase its funding for step-ups to make PBS's commitment effective.

The Coalition also challenged PBS's practice of accepting programs for national broadcast without paying for broadcast rights, a policy Lawrence Sapadin, spokesperson for the Coalition, described in a post-meeting letter to CPB Program Fund director Ron Hull as "insulting and unprofessional." Weil said that PBS has begun offering a "non-humiliating minimum" for all programs it accepts. To aid further discussion on these issues at subsequent meetings, Weil promised to supply figures on PBS's experience with step-up costs as well as an account of the PBS fees for program acquisitions in the past.

The Coalition and CPB also compromised on promotional funding, originally discussed at their first meeting last year. CPB tentatively agreed to provide $3,500–5,000 in matching funds to individual producers who submit a proposal detailing promotion plans. Despite continued Coalition protest, however, it seems the Program Fund plans to take its contribution out of its less than robust production fund budget.

One new piece of business introduced by the Coalition was, in fact, resurrected old business: a proposal to revive program series devoted largely to independent productions. Such series were the *raison d'etre* of the Program Fund, created in 1980 to answer the "independent mandate" of the public television legislation of 1978. Unfortunately, the two anthologies subsequently produced, *Matters of Life and Death* and *Crisis to Crisis,* satisfied no one—not PBS, the stations, or the producers. Viewers were not attracted by the series' portentous but hollow themes or the anthology format; even independents were dissatisfied with the meaningless hype used to package the series. The concept of an independent series did not die without a fight. When PBS balked at taking the entire *Matters of Life and Death,* preferring to select individual shows, Lewis Freedman, the Program Fund's first director, insisted on all or nothing—and lost. Relatively few stations picked up the series, and those who did scheduled it on the far side of prime time. Defeated, Freedman changed course, shifting the Program Fund's resources from independents to the station-run programming consortia. The Coalition's proposal represents an attempt to regain independents' lost and rightful territory.

In a draft statement prepared by the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers and presented at the meeting by the Coalition, the group urged the creation of a working group that would provide "grassroots input from independent producers and local public television stations" for developing a mechanism to produce such a series. They also proposed an approach that would "open up new funding for independent producers from outside the Program Fund" by "anticipat[ing] possible corporate and foundation underwriting for the series."

Everyone at the conference table agreed that a series was the best way to present independent work on public TV, and the group discussed structuring the Open Solicitation process around unifying themes. Nevertheless, the meeting ended without the establishment of a working group. Larry Daressa, co-chair of the California association, conjectured that the Fund opposed allowing independents and the stations any input into the Fund's operation and the stations resisted giving any additional programming power to the Fund. "The stations said, 'Come to us with series ideas,'" Daressa reported. "You could have a set-up in which, say, four independents created a series concept, got some foundation support, sold it to a station, and then, with the station, applied for Open Solicitation money." He added, "I don't think other independents would object, as long as these producers did not pretend to represent all independents. The advantage is that the approach is entrepreneurial, not bureaucratic. The stations would see what they were going to get." Although this approach might appeal to PBS, the long-term benefits for independents are questionable. "It's much easier to sell a project when you have a product. The disadvantage is that this arrangement is not a catalyst; no new opportunities are created," said Daressa.

At meeting's end, the Coalition agreed to try to develop a set of options or proposals toward a new series. Although no station representatives will be taking part, Joyce Campbell of Washington, D.C.'s WETA agreed to serve as an informal liaison. The matter will be reintroduced at the Coalition-CPB meeting next month.

—DG

BUDGET INCREASE FOR MASS. ARTS

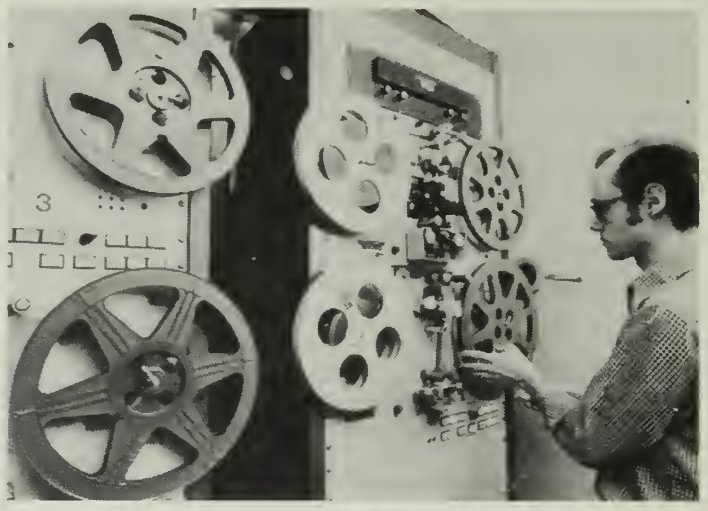
The Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities has been allocated $16,379,000 in a budget signed on July 3 by governor Michael S. Dukakis. That's up from last year's budget of $14.8-million, including the $1.2-million to arts organizations that was formerly a separate line item. The biggest beneficiary of the increase will be the New Works program, which will get $3-million, more than twice as much as the previous year. New Works has caused some debate in Massachusetts because the program provides funds to out-of-state artists.

—RT

THAT OBSCURE OBJECT OF TECHNO-DESIRE



Production workshops at Young Filmakers, recently renamed Film/Video Arts, have provided equipment access to hundreds of aspiring media makers.



Film/Video Arts has sound mixing facilities, one of the many discount services offered to independents by access centers.

Photos Jon Weider courtesy Film/Video Arts

Martha Gever

The dilemma: the economics of nonprofit media centers. Many nonprofit media organizations formed in the late sixties and seventies are in a precarious position. Most recently we've witnessed major crises at Media Study/Buffalo, the Kitchen, the Collective for Living Cinema, and Women's Interart Center—all significant institutions in New York State. Without sounding a general alarm, an evaluation of some historical directions and structural developments of media centers seems to be in order.

With such an agenda in mind, the New York Media Alliance and Film/Video Arts (itself undergoing a major transformation, signaled by the name change from Young Filmakers/Video Arts and a move from the Lower East Side to snazzier Greenwich Village quarters) convened a two-day seminar last May to discuss and debate management, financing, and the uncertain future of media access centers. Although equipment access provided the event's connecting thread, an informal and intimate mood at FVA encouraged talk about a number of broader practical and philosophical matters common in the nonprofit scene.

As it names denotes, FVA deals in both film and video access. While Jon Burris, the seminar's organizer and operations supervisor at FVA, drew careful distinctions between the problems of providing access to filmmaking equipment and video hardware, video dominated the conversations. Partially, this reflects one of Burris's observations: film technology has remained relatively stable for many decades and filmmaking tools are less delicate than their video equivalents—compare, for example, a stolid Steenbeck with a temperamental video editing system. But the emphasis on video must also be attributed to the seductiveness of new technologies; the video market is more risky and video tech talk is, therefore, more exciting.

Thus the headaches of nonprofit media centers. What to buy? How long before a particular piece of equipment becomes obsolete? How to calculate affordable rates that still underwrite the center's expenses? Who qualifies for access? How to come to terms with the virtual absence of public support for very pricey art supplies? How to compete or to avoid competition with commercial entrepreneurs? And, most important, how to stay afloat in the treacherous waters of nonprofit culture?

Early in the seminar, Gerald Lindahl, director of the audio arts organization Harvestworks, asked the 20-some participants, "What's the point of being nonprofit?" And throughout the two days' meetings Lindahl and others grappled with similar questions, comparing notes on the practices and theories they have adopted and adapted as access center managers. What doesn't work, the group almost unanimously concurred, is what FVA founder and director Rodger Larsen defined as "the soup kitchen mentality," that is, a policy of freewheeling access. Director of Pittsburgh Filmmakers Bob Marinaccio described his strategy to combat "the sixties mentality": "We were perceived as a 'hippie operation.' If we hadn't changed our image, we wouldn't be able to make the transition to professionalization." One measure taken toward this end was "a by-law change, so that the president of the organization no longer had to be a member. The president now is the comptroller of the Pittsburgh Symphony." Marinaccio's plans for attaining cultural respectability emulate the model of established art institutions like museums, ballet companies, and symphony orchestras, which survive thanks to philanthropy. But the more popular model explored at the seminar was the commercial television industry—or, ideally, a hybrid where income from commercial sources supports noncommercial activity. Several media center directors—those who usually assume responsibility for fundraising—agreed that sizable grants from private and corporate foundations for media organizations remain a pipe dream. Therefore, earned income has become the favored money-making gambit. Nonprofit media centers possess—hypothetically, at least—revenue earning potential unknown to their counterparts specializing in other arts. The same machines that produce video art can be used to make TV commercials, music videos, or corporate training tapes. Also, rental fees charged all users can defray the exorbitant costs of new equipment purchases, upkeep, real estate, staff salaries, etc.

This picture of prospective profitability conceals several flaws, however, as the experiences of groups represented at the FVA seminar made plain. Basic conflicts arise when the rules of business are applied to organizations conceived to promote noncommercial media. Nonprofit access centers, by definition, share an interest in production outside the film and television indus-

tries, but when asked to articulate a concrete rationale for their activities, the access providers gave only abstract replies. Burris: "to provide any reasonable service—from low to high tech—to any person"; Raj Sharma from the Boston Film/Video Foundation: "to serve independent artists"; Michael Rothbard, director of the Intermedia Art Center in Huntington, New York: "to give the user what they have a right to expect."

Ironically, embedded in these vague statements is the "soup kitchen" notion of tying access to aspirations to make media, not to an ability to pay the going rates. These days, though, no media center can afford to offer open access without levying fees, and many access veterans endorse the idea that the exchange of money encourages responsible use of equipment. Burris: "There is nothing in the world more clear-cut than money." Rothbard: "It's quantifiable." Gerry Pallor, director of Locus Communications: "Paying makes users more disciplined and the work is better." Such sentiments echo the concepts behind commerce, at odds with media premised on noncommercial criteria.

Still, the fees charged at Locus, FVA, and IMAC are plenty cheap compared to industry rates. The trade-off is that at high-end commercial houses, the client gets state-of-the-art. The multimillions required to furnish those facilities are clearly beyond the reach of nonprofits, which sustain themselves with state arts council grants, some National Endowment for the Arts money, and constant cost-cutting (the seminar conversations about pay scales, for instance, confirmed that nonprofit media workers—with the exception of engineers—frequently receive less than a living wage). Remember, many of these centers began as NYSCA-dependent service organizations, called equipment pools, in the days when the gulf between video and TV seemed unbridgeable and low tech promised to democratize media. To some, like Pallor, the separation still exists: "The commercial industry doesn't share many of the values we have." Pallor charges those working on projects with commercial backing 40 percent more than the amount paid by members whose work is self-funded or grant supported. Burris found the distinction less functional: "There's a large area where the values are tremendously shared. Look at the influence of commercials on independent work and vice versa. It's enormous. It's aesthetic." Burris believes, "We live in a time where virtually everything has a commercial intention—whether or not it's viable... Intention is a false issue." In his view, artists are entitled to a piece of the action, if they can get it. Almost none can, of course, which is what rate differentials recognize. Contradictory? Perhaps. Nonetheless, FVA charges commercial clients $150 per hour for use of its Videola while independents pay about $50 per hour.

At the same time that nonprofits are weighing the pros and cons of luring commercial clients with sophisticated hardware, learning marketing techniques, and worrying over their barely balanced budgets, independents are seeking good deals at commercial facilities, where services may be cheap and hassles few or where they can buy the latest effects and the best quality master tape. No nonprofit can afford an ADO, and only one media center in the country, the Bay Area Video Coalition in San Francisco, has a CMX 1″ to 1″ editing system. But then, few independents can foot the bill for $275 an hour editing sessions.

In New York the gap between techno-desire and its object has been narrowed by a program initiated and administered by the NY Media Alliance. The paradigm is the On-Line program, which offers producers time at commercial, high-end production houses at reduced rates. Media Alliance director Robin White sees On-Line as an important resource for producers as well as an extension of the organizations' educational mandate: "[The artists' projects] generate moral and financial support from the commercial sector." Others conjectured that professional editors' boredom might be alleviated by working with artists' unconventional material. But what best explains the program's success is the current slump in the video processing business. Robert McDowell, president of the Sound Shop, previously a manager at Reeves Teletape, agreed that the proliferation of well-stocked postproduction facilities in New York City a few years ago resulted from overly optimistic projections for an expanded cable industry. And "that didn't happen." McDowell's job change is symptomatic: the postproduction facility at Reeves folded last summer, done in by the laws of supply and demand. Meanwhile, the Media Alliance acts as a mediator between underbooked facilities and independents; once a project is approved, the discount is substantial—about $65 per hour for an interformat edit.

Arthur Tsuchiya, associate at the NYSCA Media Program, cogently outlined the advantages for independents: producers can now produce in a consumer format—½″ or 8mm, make a window dub with time code, do a rough cut at low rates, bump the selected material to 1″, fine cut on 1″, and walk out with a high-quality master. To complement this scenario, he suggested that access centers "pave the road to Broadway Video [one of the On-Line participants]." Pallor, on the other hand, doesn't want to cater to the potential On-Line user: "There's a whole world of other options. I don't see our function as serving the upper end of the entire system."

Given the insecurities of business ventures premised on ever-changing technologies and volatile economies, either a real boom or a devastating bust could foreclose On-Line. Outside the industry, however, producers won't find the high tech that drives the video market. When no media center represented at the seminar can afford an A/B roll video system at a cost of $25,000, when FVA has just assumed a $100,000 debt to finance its Videola and BF/VF had to raise $50,000 in pledges from its members to buy a ¾″ fine cut system, state-of-the-art (whatever that may be from one month to the next) remains elusive. And it's unlikely that any public funder is going to write that ticket. Tsuchiya: "The risks should by taken by those who've decided to play that game, not the boards of directors of nonprofits." This puts media centers in a quandary. Some, like Rothbard, regard providing the highest tech as a duty to artists. Others, such as Margot Lewitin, director of Women's Interart, want sophisticated equipment in order to snag some commercial clients. And others, like Pallor, hope to sustain and build on existing services to the independent community without raising prices significantly. Without detailing a specific wish list, Burris commented, "We're being pushed into high tech because low tech is so cheap.... We have to take steps to maintain the fact that we're a comprehensive production/postproduction environment. That means changing with the field. That's what video artists are demanding of themselves."

If the equation of technology, aesthetics, and progress is correct, Lindahl's query about the desirability of nonprofit status becomes rhetorical. There is none. If the market sets the standards and determines the limits, the role of nonprofit media access can be subsumed by marketplace ingenuity. In major production centers like New York City small video ventures match access center rates. Producers' equipment cooperatives, discussed briefly at the seminar's end, serve the same function. In Burris's analysis, "It's now quite possible for individuals to own the means of production."

But not *all* individuals. Nor are ownership and access synonymous, nor is the concept of media access simply compensation for equipment poverty. But the inability of access center managers at the FVA-Media Alliance meeting to define the links between their work and communications forms divorced from marketplace directives results in confusion about their role. The point of being nonprofit, of conceiving media as noncommercial, becomes obscured when technological shifts guide access policies or policymakers succumb to the enchantments of electronic wizardry in the name of art. Access then becomes tailored to buying and selling such goodies. In the mid-eighties, when commercial mass media and electronic communications increasingly intrude on all aspects of private and public life, mimicry seems a poor alternative. Rather, nonprofit media organizations should promote and participate in noncommercial culture—and access is key in this process. Which is to say, machines are the means, not the end.

COMMERCIAL BREAKS: PROFITS, NONPROFITS, TAXES

Paula R. Schaap

[Author's note: This article is presented only for the purpose of educating the independent producer and is not to be taken as legal advice. The independent film or videomaker should, therefore, always consult an attorney before undertaking any course that may have legal ramifications.]

On the day our intrepid independent filmmaker—Cinema Verite—opened her fourth can of Spaghetti-O's in as many days and carefully warmed it over a Bunsen burner (Con Ed having taken the liberty of terminating her electric service), she had a stroke of genius. She didn't have to live like this for the sake of her art; she would become a tax-exempt organization.

Cine, as she is known to her friends, has two films under her belt: *Horror in the Attic* and *Horror in the Basement.* Both films play at midnight on 42nd Street to delighted leather-jacketed teenage audiences. The distributor who promised Cine she would net her weight in gold now sneers and surrounds himself with cigar smoke every time Cine shows up at his office in the rear of a bodega on Ninth Avenue. Which is why Cine is eating Spaghetti-O's that she buys from the wistful-looking lady who runs the bodega; Cine feels sorry for her having to put up with the cigar-chomping distributor. But now Cine has hit on a plan to establish a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation which will have, as its educational purpose, the encouragement of women filmmakers in the horror film industry.

Cine will soon find, however, that the ways and means of managing a tax-exempt organization are not peril free, especially when the organization is involved in a project or produces income that is not strictly within the tax code's understanding of what tax-exempt organizations are. This article deals with what happens, tax-wise, when the world of profit impinges upon the world of tax-exempt organizations. (A few words on what this article is *not* about. It is not about organizations that are engaged in lobbying or other political activity; it is also not about private foundations. These organizations have their own set of rules that are not within the scope of this article.)

Of course, in order for our story to begin, Cine must properly set up a not-for-profit organization in accordance with the laws of her state and apply to the IRS for tax-exempt status. [See "Legal Talk," *The Independent,* May 1984, p.11.] For tax purposes, Cine's organization will be what is known as a 501(c)(3) organization. Such organizations are also known as "exempt" organizations for the simple reason that they are exempt from income tax, something my great-uncle Leo has been striving toward for years. The part of the tax code's definition of a 501(c)(3) organization that applies to Cine's organization states that an exempt organization is a corporation that is "organized and operated exclusively" for literary or educational purposes where no part of net earnings "inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual." The definition goes on to prohibit such organizations from engaging in substantial propaganda, lobbying, or political activities.

As we can see, Cine is probably already in trouble. It is doubtful whether the Internal Revenue Service will view her proposed organization's purpose as "literary or educational." Therefore, Cine rewrites her charter for her exempt organization. It now states that Filmwomen, Inc., is organized to train women in the art of filmmaking and to disseminate women's films so as to educate the public to the presence of women in film.

The word "exclusively" in the 501(c)(3) definition has been interpreted as meaning "primarily." This interpretation reflects Congress's understanding that a tax-exempt organization may be involved in trade or business activities which are outside its exempt purposes without violating its exempt status. The "primarily" test is satisfied as long as the trade or business activities are "insubstantial." Unfortunately, there is no definition of "insubstantial" in the tax code or the accompanying regulations. However, if Filmwomen begins production of Cine's breakthrough film, *Horror in the Jacuzzi,* funded with tax-deductible contributions donated to her tax-exempt organization, it is a sure bet that this will not be considered "insubstantial."

Tax court cases and IRS revenue rulings indicate that the IRS will look to see if the trade or business activity conducted by the exempt organization is regular, ongoing, and similar to the conduct of such trade or business as practiced by the for-profit sector, to determine if the activities are "substantial." Exceptions to this rule are where the exempt organization sells merchandise that it received as gifts or contributions, or where substantially all the work performed in the conduct of the trade or business is performed by volunteers.

In order to protect her non-exempt status, Cine should consider establishing a separate, fully taxable organization. Some or all of the profits can be donated to the tax-exempt organization. The for-profit organization can then take a charitable deduction within the limits provided by the tax code. However, the two entities must be run as separate organizations, each with its own charter, bylaws, records, and so on; otherwise the IRS may find that the exempt organization's involvement in the taxable organization's trade or business is too extensive to merit the exempt organization retaining its special status.

It is not always necessary to set up a separate taxable organization, however. An organization may pass the IRS test for tax exemption even if it operates a trade or business as a substantial part of its activities, provided that such trade or business is in furtherance of the organization's exempt purposes. For example, one of Filmwomen's exempt purposes is to expose the public to films produced by women. Cine and her fellow women filmmakers rent a theater and hold screenings of films made under Filmwomen's aegis to which the public is invited and admission is charged. Conducting the screenings will probably not endanger the organization's tax-exempt status.

In addition, if the screenings are held on an occasional basis—as fundraisers, for example—the income probably will not be taxable. Even if the organization shows its films on an ongoing basis, it could be argued that this is still within Filmwomen's exempt purpose. If, however, the exempt organization also uses its theater to show films which are made by women, but are purely commercial in nature (and we know whose films will head the bill), the income from those film screenings may be taxed as unrelated taxable business income. Filmwomen may be able to argue that the showing of all films made by women is directly related to their exempt purposes, but the IRS probably will not turn a blind eye to the profits rolling in from the leather-jacketed teenage set.

The unrelated business income tax (UBIT, as I shall call it), was instituted because Congress didn't want exempt organizations to compete with profit-making organizations while having the distinct advantage of not paying taxes. Since the showing of Cine's less edifying productions are in direct competition with the cigar-chomping distributor, the receipts from such showings would probably classify as unrelated business taxable income. The UBIT is figured on gross income from any unrelated trade or business less the normal allowable business deductions, with special modifications provided by the UBIT section of the tax code.

If the exempt organization has unrelated business income, it can take normal business deductions with one major *caveat:* the deductions must be directly attributable to the unrelated trade or business income. Therefore, if Filmwomen buys a movie camera to shoot its documentaries on women in America, it cannot use the depreciation deduction for that equipment purchase to offset income from the screenings of Cine's horror films. Additionally, dual use of facilities or personnel should be allocated

appropriately between the tax-exempt and taxable income. For example, if Cine's salary is $20,000 and she spends 10 percent of her time on the unrelated business, she can deduct $2,000 of her salary from the income generated by the unrelated trade or business. Another feature of UBIT is that income will not be taxable where business is carried on by an organization that is not compensated for conducting the business.

Gross income under UBIT may be affected by modifications for rental income. Income from the rental of real property, and income from the rental of personal property that is leased with the real property, is excluded from tax if it meets certain criteria. To escape taxation, the personal property leased with the real property must be no more than 10 percent of the overall rent charged. Furthermore, even the income from the rental of the real property will be taxed if more than 50 percent of the rental is attributable to personal property. Both real property and personal property rental income will be taxed if the rent is dependent upon income derived from the property so leased, unless the rent is based on a fixed percentage of gross receipts or sales.

Let's say that Filmwomen leases a building for its operations. In turn, Filmwomen leases a floor of the building and the equipment on that floor to another film company. The leases for the floor and equipment (which are counted as one lease for purposes of UBIT calculations) total $10,000 per month. Even though the lease for the film equipment states that the rent is only $850, the IRS, in its infinite wisdom, finds that $2,000 is properly attributable to the equipment. Therefore, since the personal property amounts to more than 10 percent of the overall lease, the $2,000 income will not be excludable from tax. The rent from the film equipment is not, however more than 50 percent of the rent for the real property; therefore, the real property rental income will be excluded from UBIT.

Finally, there is a special deduction for UBIT of up to $1,000 or the income from the unrelated trade or business, whichever is less.

There is another consideration concerning profits, apart from the tax code. Contracts with funding groups such as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, or private foundations will often contain a clause that provides that a certain percentage of the profits must be returned to the funding organization. The ceiling for profits returned is usually the amount of the grant. The grant recipient should check its contract with the funding organization to see if there is such a provision.

Now that Cine is happily set up with her exempt organization, and can afford pizza three times a week, we can stroll down to one of her screenings on a moonlit night. Yech. Gad. What is that thing?

Paula R. Schaap is a writer and entertainment lawyer.

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STORYTELLER

AN INTERVIEW WITH

Rob Edelman

Haile Gerima was born in the town of Gondar, in northwest Ethiopia. His father, a playwright and storyteller, authored dramas about cultural or historical figures and topics, and traveled throughout Ethiopia with a theater troupe that presented his work. The younger Gerima came to the United States in 1967 to study at Chicago's Goodman School of Drama. He received his M.F.A. in film from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1976, and is currently an associate professor of film at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

Gerima is, of course, also a filmmaker. His credits include *Ashes and Embers* (1982), the chronicle of a troubled Black Vietnam veteran who grows to understand the experience of Vietnam and its similarities to the experience of Black Americans; *Wilmington 10—U.S.A. 10,000* (1978), his sole documentary to date, in which interviews with Black men, women, and children detail the historical struggle of African people in the U.S.; *Harvest: 3,000 Years* (1976), the story of a peasant family's struggle for survival; *Bushmama* (1976), his master's thesis, the portrait of an urban Black woman trying to raise her daughter with her man in jail, who is pushed over the edge after a series of confrontations with institutions; and *Child of Resistance* (1972), made while still a student, the story of a Black woman who shares her fears, frustrations, and dreams from behind prison bars.

Gerima's main project now, however, is the operation of a five-year old collectively owned film production/distribution company, Mypheduh Films. Mypheduh (which means "sacred shield" in Geze, an earlier form of Amharic, the official language of Ethiopia) is designed to intensify the production, distribution, and exhibition of film from Africa and other Third World areas. In addition to all of Gerima's titles, Mypheduh currently distributes Alonzo Crawford's *Dirt, Ground, Earth & Land;* Charles Burnett's *Killer of Sheep;* Med Hondo's *Soleil-O;* Jose Cardoso's *They Dare Cross Our Border;* Kathleen Collins's *The Cruz Brothers and Miss Malloy* and *Losing Ground;* and Camilo De Sousa's *The Offensive, Unity in Feast, Mueda: Memorial and Massacre,* and *These Are the Weapons.*

•

Rob Edelman: How did you get involved with film? Why did you switch from theater to cinema?

Haile Gerima: I tried becoming actively involved in theater, as a playwright and director, but I became frustrated. I felt that I needed to find a medium I could control more. Then, one day, I stumbled—literally—into the film department at UCLA. For the first time I saw the possibilities of the film medium. By working as a writer and director, behind the camera and in the editing room, I could more successfully communicate my ideas. I quickly transferred into the department.

RE: And what are those ideas? Why do you make the films you make? How do you go about selecting your subjects? Why *Ashes and Embers?* Why *Bushmama*? Why the others?

HG: Mostly, I am obsessed with certain subjects. There are decisive factors and issues in my films that I am trying to articulate. First, I have an obsession with anti-exploitation. Fundamentally, I think that human beings are constantly disrupted by one person exploiting another. It can be between individuals—wives and husbands, parents and children—or between different classes and national groups. This is a constant theme in all of my films. But it has to be taken several steps further.

Next, there is the idea of struggle. My characters must struggle, both to define themselves and to overcome their oppression and exploitation. As a result, they are transformed, because any individual is capable of doing something about his or her condition. My characters symbolically represent the larger issues that concern me. For instance, in *Ashes and Embers,* I wanted to present a generation in struggle through a character who had an extreme experience—fighting in Vietnam—that left him scarred. He must fight; he must struggle to understand himself and his relationships with those around him so that he can be transformed. The character in *Bushmama,* who is also oppressed and victimized, must learn to be assertive. Her consciousness is finally fully awakened when her daughter is assaulted. She can no longer be passive. In *Child of Resistance,* the character, from behind bars, begins to realize that her people are oppressed. Her awareness comes out of her own situation; she is enlightened while in prison. The family in *Harvest: 3,000 Years* is, literally, struggling for survival, and in *Wilmington 10...* I wanted to define how political prisoners in this country are related to the past, to those who struggled during the time of slavery.

Ultimately, I hope that seeing my films can be therapeutic, can help an individual to participate actively in a struggle rather than to sit back passively or drop out. I hope that my films will make people think, will give them ideas, will get them to actually work for change.

RE: Can this only begin with the individual and work outward? Or must it result from a collective experience?

HG: I would say both. These are inseparable. Without one, there cannot be the other. I define myself—or, I fight to define myself—within the context of the community. And the community is composed of individuals.

RE: The word that comes to mind when I think of your films—and you've just used the word yourself, several times, is "struggle." Is there also a struggle for you personally?

HG: It's a fact that most Third World peoples don't have access to self-expression. This is an act of struggle—to gain the right to express myself and, in doing so, advance my language and temperament in cinema. This is also an obsession. It's not just content; it's also wanting to participate in the transformation of the form. And, then, while I may be pushing a view, I'm

OF STRUGGLES

HAILE GERIMA

also advancing my language in film, developing my sense of sight and sound. In this way, for me each film is a learning process.

RE: What is your approach to filmmaking? Do you prefer to work from finished scripts? Or improvise with actors during the shoot? Do your actors have input while you're actually making the film?

HG: I'm very much interested in experiencing each phase of a given project. After I have an idea, I work very hard on my scripts. I'm now researching and writing one. As you can see [pointing to his desk], there's a Bible; there's a book on the liberation of Mozambique; there are books on theology, and African theology. This is in preparation for a film about European and African cultures coming in contact. Theology plays a major role here, so it's very important to understand the different interpretations of theology.

And this is the foundation; this is where I begin. But I still do not become a possessive landlord about the scripts. At any given stage, I am perfectly capable of turning over the script to my actors. I do require that they understand it and its theory. Once I trust an actor, that actor inherits those characters I've developed. The actor can bring a personal interpretation as an additional asset. At all levels, there's a process that's both individually and collectively oriented.

RE: Do you like to stick to the letter of the script? Or, if you feel the actors understand what you are saying, do you give them flexibility? Can they change dialogue if they feel that what you've written is not really in character?

HG: Oh, yes. I'm not basically a writer. I'm more interested in the believability of the character rather than poetic or literary dialogue. What's important is how the viewer believes in circumstances I've invented. In that moment of struggle when the actor is in front of the camera, I'm not going to be too possessive about the dialogue. I'm more interested in communicating the emotional and intellectual aspect.

RE: Is there a relationship between the form and structure of your films and their content? In other words, the way the film is written and what the words are saying?

HG: You have to be conscious of this. Once you set up your camera, you are choosing a point of view. And once you get into the editing room, you'll splice the world according to your perspective. From then on, a rhythm and structure and pacing are set in motion. Everything has its own inherent, inseparable form and content. Ultimately, though, what's required of the artist, the storyteller, violates this. You can then transform form and content. But there must be a constant search, a constant struggle and battle, to achieve this transformation. The artist's responsibility is to explore, and when you do so you can stumble into an uncertain, unpredictable, uncalculated, almost magical sense of art. If there are no surprises, no magical moments in the editing room, it's boring.

RE: Are there any specific films that have influenced the pacing and texture in your work, that have given you ideas about how to communicate?

HG: Nothing specific. Rather, it's all in my background; it all relates to my father. I strive to understand the way he told his stories, and to translate this into visual terms on the screen. It's very personal. He is the reason why I first wanted to go into the theater.

RE: I have a question that we all know the answer to, but, for the record...could you make the films that you've been making in Hollywood?

HG: Well, the studios would not be interested. My films could be made better there—with the availability of bigger budgets and better technology. The primary concern of Hollywood, of course, is profit-making. When you consider profit-making, you don't go into uncertain areas. You have to go into exhausted, certain areas.

RE: Exactly who and what is an independent filmmaker? What does the term "independent" imply?

HG: First, I'd like to see a more concrete dialogue about independent filmmaking emerge in the U.S. Most independent filmmakers are self-deceiving. They seem to be waiting to be accommodated elsewhere, to be admitted through that large studio gate. But instead they should be vigilantly struggling to change society. To me, cinema is part of reality and should be a tool for changing society. Independent filmmaking is a dying phenomenon because people are not consciously aware of the implications of that declaration: wanting to be independent, and meaning to be independent, because you are not satisfied with the existing structures. Those who are truly interested in social change should get off their butts and fight to change the very system that keeps them outside. This has been my concern for quite some time.

RE: But isn't it true that many filmmakers are independents out of necessity rather than choice? They want to make splashes that will then enable them to go Hollywood?

HG: You can be independent, but if the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* pick you up, you become confused. Your aesthetic is affected. You need stars. You may think you are still disassociated from Hollywood, but of course you are not. In fact, big stars should not exist. All human beings should be equal. For me, an independent filmmaker cannot use Hollywood conventions that are oppressive and still say that he or she is independent. That is hypocritical. I'd prefer Scorsese and Coppola. In fact, their films make interesting social commentary. Certain Hollywood filmmakers do struggle to make sensible films, and I respect them. It's not simply by being excluded that you become independent. Ultimately, it's a political stance.

RE: Since you are not working in Hollywood, how do you get your films made?

HG: My first ones were made when I was a student—with money I saved. Also, I have received various grants. Of course, money is necessary, but I find that people are ultimately the decisive factor in filmmaking. The films I've made have come about because people believed





in them, and were willing to collaborate with me on each project. I've never had money to attract people; I've always been in situations where I've depended on human beings who believed in me. Also, each film must be accountable: each film should enable me to make the next one. One of the inherently self-destructive elements of independent filmmaking operates when filmmakers are dependent on outside, welfare-type relationships with funding sources. It's not that I won't accept grants, because I have, but my whole objective has been to become independent of those systematic, dangerous, pacifying aspects of grants. *Ashes and Embers,* for example, was produced by revenues earned from my previous films. Now, all the money it has earned has enabled me to become involved in distribution. I want to be a responsible distributor because in the Black filmmaking scene distribution has been a fundamental problem.

RE: How do you get your films out to the public? Why did you feel that you had to set up your own distribution company?

HG: When you make films intended to effect social change, you really must create your own infrastructures that will play a role in taking your films in their logical direction. I know that most distributors are not that interested in the Black filmmaking scene in the U.S. The needs of the Black community are totally different from those of others. For example, a film on housing may be ripe in a Black community but not elsewhere. So a film on housing would not be considered a good "business venture." And even when a distributor takes your film, you may not receive money for a long time. I've learned that when others distribute your films you end up being exploited.

RE: How did you learn this?

HG: My films were first distributed by Tricontinental, before it became Unifilm. When this company went bankrupt, they had my negatives and prints and just left them in their office. The landlord told me that he was going to throw it all out. This is how much they cared! The company went out of business, left my work, and vanished.

Third World filmmakers in particular should develop their own collectives to distribute their work. Equally, independent filmmakers of any kind should collectively distribute—and receive larger revenues. I try to return 80 percent of all income to the filmmaker. Even a 50–50 split is not fair when you are dealing with filmmakers who have put their life savings into their work. It's not right for the distributor to make a high profit, with the filmmaker having no control over the revenue. Personally, I would prefer to make films. I'm not a business person, and I hate the idea of the whole hassle of distribution. But if you believe in struggle, you cannot simply make your films and condemn them to the distribution structures that are blind to your vision. You should be instrumental in creating infrastructures that are capable of responding to anyone interested in seeing your films.

RE: This is a problem many artists have. They

From left to right:
Gerima (center) primarily used non-actors to shoot "Harvest: 3,000 Years" on location in Ethiopia.

From "Bushmama," Haile Gerima's film about a woman's conflicts with institutions on the outside, while her man is on the inside.

An assault on her young daughter leads to a mother's politicization in "Bushmama."
All photos courtesy filmmaker







From left to right:
Evelyn Blackwell (left) is Grandma, a symbol of birthright and heritage, with whom the troubled Vietnam vet Nate Charles (John Anderson, right) eventually finds refuge in "Ashes and Embers."

In his only documentary to date, Gerima chronicled the struggle of political activists known as the Wilmington 10.

would much rather paint the painting, write the novel, make the film. Then, somehow, the painting is hung in the gallery, the novel is published, the film is distributed.

HG: You have to struggle on this level. You are naive to think you do not.

RE: Why did you decide to settle in Washington? Why not New York or Los Angeles, where there's more of a film community?

HG: For me, it's more than being in a film community. Howard University is a very important place for me. Part of my commitment is that, whenever I make a film, I try to multiply Third World filmmakers. I use individuals on my crews who would not otherwise have opportunities to work. Also, here I can teach students who have come from all over the world, from Africa, South and Central America. When I'm not making films I like to teach and encourage Third World filmmakers.

RE: Do you have particular teaching methods?

HG: I try to be dialectical with regard to film structure and storytelling—from the initial idea to the script to the execution. I don't just teach the technical end of filmmaking, and I cannot. I balance this by stressing sensitivity toward presenting characters in a nonstereotypical manner. Stereotyping often comes about because of negligence: the writer or director not caring about the characters outside their principal purpose in the story. Such characters are not well conceived. They have no purpose in life. The filmmaker should ask about *all* the characters: What kind of lives do they lead? What is their direction? Why do they live on this planet? I ask my students, "Do you want to go Hollywood, or do you want to create your own identity in film?" I would hope that they would, ultimately, not want to create works of art without accountability for the contents. Sometimes I succeed, sometimes not. I'd be lying if I said I succeeded all the time.

RE: What happens to them after they graduate?

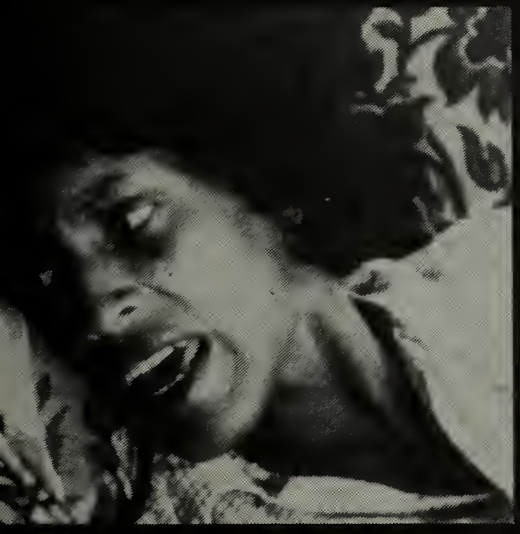
HG: Some try to find jobs, while others begin making films. I don't want to mention any names, because I don't want to sound like I'm favoring one over another.

RE: For now, Washington is the place for you to be?

HG: No, not Washington, but Howard University. I'm primarily a resident of Howard University. And I do hope that, someday, I will be able to return home and make films in Ethiopia, in Africa. This is one immigrant who has never settled. You know, it's very hard to make lasting, important films about social change. But I've made my choice. And I won't use the same destructive grammar and conventions that have oppressed people. I'm very stubborn. I cannot compromise.

Rob Edelman is the associate editor of Leonard Maltin's TV Movies and selects the films included in the Home Film Festival.

© Rob Edelman 1985





THINKING GLOBALLY ACTING LOCALLY

Renee Tajima



NAIM's archive document the Lon est Walk for Survive Here, a teepee erec ed at the base of th Washington Mon ment.
Courtesy NAIM

Last April, a supervisor in a Texas furniture warehouse stumbled across a trove of dilapidated film reels. About 20 of those films turned out to be independent Black theatrical works produced in the 1930s to fifties. Although the find stirred a great deal of excitement for its historical value, the image of dusty, moldy reels hidden among sofabeds is sadly ironic. Today, in the "communications era," decades after these films were first produced, Black media in the southern United States—where many areas are predominantly Black—remain severely and outrageously sparse. The absence of these voices is particularly keen in the South because of the special relationship that people of color have to the land. Native Americans and the southwest's Chicanos have descended from this continent's original inhabitants. Southern Blacks cultivated the land for centuries and built the economy there.

Twenty-six years ago, Frantz Fanon told the Second Congress of Black Artists and Writers in Rome, "A national culture under colonial domination is a contested culture whose destruction is sought in a systematic fashion. It very quickly becomes a culture condemned to secrecy." Without launching into a polemic on the colonization of Black culture in the U.S., or of Indian nations, Puerto Rico, the Pacific Islands, etc., one thing remains clear: the cultures of these peoples thrive, but are clandestine, hidden from view to the outsider, in other words, colonized. No doubt, this is largely due to the neglect by the mass media as cultural purveyor. And without the sufficient means for producing, many cultures have suffered.

There has been a boomlet in southern filmmaking in recent years, enough to prompt the American Film Institute to convene a symposium on the topic last April. But this activity has been predominantly white. Although independent media organizations and producers have been at the heart of the upsurge, they have not adequately contributed to democratization and diversity by opening access to people of color. We *should* be able to tune in public broadcasting stations to watch screen adaptations of southern Black women's literature, the Indian way of seeing translated into video, and the Indian version of history likewise documented. Instead, there is a vacuum.

In an earlier article I described some Latino media centers in the U.S. where media activism is guided by principles of self-determination and battles against the erasure of their own images [see "Latino Media: Democracy Begins at Home," *The Independent,* January/February 1985]. Native American and Black media activists in the South are also deeply aware of their strategic role and political roots. The leadership in two newly formed media centers—the Native American Indian Media Corporation in Strawberry Plains, Tennessee, and the Atlanta Media Project—come directly out of movements for equality and are taking up the slack in moving media democratization forward.

It's no wonder that the Native American Indian Media group took on the acronym of NAIM: its founders were inspired by the arrival of the American Indian Movement's (AIM) Longest Walk for Survival several years ago. Organized to protest the abrogation of treaty rights and to call attention to a whole range of Native American issues that had been ignored by the media, the Longest Walk stopped in nearby Knoxville on the way from San Francisco to Washington, D.C.

The Black media center AMP was established in 1980 as the result of a successful lawsuit by the Atlanta chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia against Cox Broadcasting. The NAACP and the ACLU charged discrimination in areas like employment and programming practices at Cox's radio and television stations. But, according to Joandelle Johnson, the plaintiff in the suit, who is now executive director of the NAACP chapter and the president of AMP, during the course of their investigation the basis for a second lawsuit against Cox Cable took shape. The plaintiffs found that Cox held the majority interest in the Inner City Broadcasting Group, an ostensibly integrated company that owned the Atlanta cable franchise. The NAACP and the ACLU again sued Cox for discrimination—only the predominantly white north side had been wired—and for constituting a monopoly, based on the company's ownership of Atlanta's two daily newspapers, the *Constitution* and the *Journal,* WSB-Radio (AM and FM), and WSB-TV. The FCC agreed, and Cox Cable was forced to sell its franchise. The original suit against Cox Broadcasting was settled out of court. As part of the settlement, Cox donated money for AMP's equipment and for the establishment of the Clark College Communications Center.

NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN MEDIA AND THE ATLANTA MEDIA PROJECT



t the U.S. Capitol, the te Buddhist leader, e Venerable Fuji aruji, offers a solidar- y statement.
ourtesy NAIM

AMP and NAIM, then, represent responses to segregation in the media industry and the special role that media centers can play in the South.

NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN MEDIA CENTER

NAIM's mandate has been clear from the outset. "We wanted something to entrench the Indian movement with the arts," explains NAIM chair MaCaki TeSheWa. TeSheWa and executive director Frank Eastes founded the group in South Carolina four years ago. At the time, Eastes was a freelance producer who got his start in media at the South Carolina Arts Commission with the help of former SCAC resident filmmaker Stan Woodward. In 1982, NAIM decided to locate the center in Strawberry Plains, where the Tennessee Indian Council has an office. The Council is a nonprofit social service group that runs programs in skills training and the like. NAIM seemed an appropriate program because, TeSheWa says, "One of the tenets of the Council is to change the consciousness of people. Presenting your own story is part of the fight for survival." At the same time, the Longest Walk came through the area and sparked new enthusiasm. "It was the whole feeling and mood at the time," recounts Eastes. "All of us felt that it was time to start something. Our original idea was to do documentation of the march as we came in touch with people. But it grew beyond that when we found there was so much else to do."

The fledgling group approached the Native American Church for support, which agreed to sponsor Eastes's residence at Appalshop in Whitesburg, Kentucky, where he learned advanced media skills and made contacts within the alternative media network. Despite this support from regional media centers, when it came time to organize, NAIM chose to go it alone. According to TeSheWa, this autonomy is "tied into the struggle for self-determination and the propagation of Indian sovereignty. Even if you have minorities sitting on the board of directors somewhere, their input is minimal. And other individuals are taken care of, as tokens. I believe people who have skills should come back into the community and help." NAIM explicitly conceives of itself as combining independent media with Native American social movements.

NAIM got its first big boost in 1983, when a sympathetic television station, WSJK, the local PBS affiliate, offered to sell all of their film equipment at bargain basement prices. After a long wait, the Native American Church and the Tennessee Valley Authority minority loan fund agreed to provide matching funds to buy the equipment, worth almost $100,000, but purchased by NAIM for a little more than $30,000. NAIM was able to go into operation last fall in a two-story suburban home next to an interstate highway in Strawberry Plains. But winter floods damaged the facility and much of its donated equipment, forcing it to shut down temporarily.

NAIM has since regrouped and is gearing up for a possible opening this fall to coincide with the Harvest Festival. The center has been named the Independent Media Artist Resource Center and is operating part-time, offering individual training and sponsoring artist-in-residence Rick Tochar. When IMARC fully revives, independents will be offered access to video and 16mm film equipment and support services. There are also plans to bring Native American producers from around the country for residencies at the center. TeSheWa would like to see IMARC document traditions for their descendants, to build an archive that not only maintains a cultural record but contributes to his people's survival as well. He points to the long struggles of the Catawbas in South Carolina, who spent more than 15 years fighting for their claim to 144,000 acres of land. "They had no archives. Maybe if they did, they would have had an easier fight with government."

ATLANTA MEDIA PROJECT

Worth Long is something of a modern *griot*. A Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee organizer during the sixties and an itinerant folklorist for over a decade, Long knows the backroads and culture of the Black South as well as anyone. This year he was hired to head the Atlanta Media Project and build it into a major Black media center. Long regards his work at AMP as an extension of the organizing philosophy that fueled the civil rights movement.

AMP is located on the Clark College campus in Atlanta, probably the South's most media-sophisticated city and the site of the annual Third World Film Festival. But even in Atlanta, Black representation in the media is not equitable. Long points out that, due to segregation, Blacks entered the media industry late in the South. Only after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did they start moving into the broadcasting



The Atlanta Media Project provides a means toward self-expression and self-determination for southern Blacks. Top right: Parthe Edwards translates for African filmmaker Gaston Kabore during Africa Week, sponsored by the Atlanta Third World Film Festival.
Photo Rick Reed courtesy Atlanta Third World Film Festival

industry, particularly public television. There they started at the bottom of the ladder, and over the years some people produced sporadic signature pieces on the side. According to AMP producer Muriel Jackson, much of the talent is still drained by the North, and many who stay simply do not receive sufficient support. Cheryl Chisholm, director of the Third World Film Festival, also blames the lack of support services for Black independents and the inadequate outreach efforts of regional media centers for the minimal development of Black media.

Long concurs and gives little weight to the complaints of media centers that Blacks don't respond to their gestures. "Whether or not the media centers have tried to reach Black producers, they just haven't been successful. They haven't made a commitment. Otherwise, they would find out how to do it successfully." He continues, "I think it's necessary for media centers to recognize the importance of collective Black organizing. Often one individual Black filmmaker becomes the honorary token. I believe it's more important to organize people at political and technical levels as a caucus that has clout. Once you do that, the person with advanced skills makes a commitment to the younger ones. Whites don't understand that. They basically send out brochures to 100 Black organizations and wonder why they don't come."

He cites the Highlander Center in New Market, Tennessee, as an example of effective participation. Highlander has developed Black cultural leadership since the 1950s—going into the community as well as bringing people to the center. Filmmaker Lucy Massie Phenix, for example, sought out Black production people to work on her latest project on contemporary Black-white relations. As a result, Long says, "It doesn't matter if Highlander is in the mountains or the ocean, people would go there wherever they are."

AMP also has forged ties with others interested in media democracy in Atlanta. Through its affiliation with the Clark College School of Communications, AMP has access to state-of-the-art video equipment, including a fully-equipped mobile unit purchased with partial funds from the Cox suit settlement. Long intends to use the hardware to produce cable access programs and conduct workshops, as well as for co-productions with Black independents. "As Pete Seeger says, we'll 'think internationally but act locally.'" For example, AMP has produced programs on local issues for their *Challenge for Change* cable series. One of these, *Reidsville Bus,* is a tape about an old school bus that takes families to visit relatives in a local prison. Another by Muriel Jackson profiles Black women who work as housekeepers. Long hopes to produce shows with production values that will enable national distribution.

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Acting locally, NAIM and AMP have begun to tackle the nationwide challenge of opening access to many who have been locked out. But the test may be whether the broader media arts field will take on the commitment of democratizing its own ranks. Beginning at home, the established southern media arts centers can lend their expertise and resources to work cooperatively with groups like AMP and NAIM. The touring film series Southern Circuit, organized by the SCAC media center, for example, has a regional exhibition network firmly in place. Perhaps that network can begin to extend to minority communities, with programming that includes the work of southern-based minority independents. Also, organizations like the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers and the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers can lend national attention and visibility to the effort. When the National Coalition of Independent Broadcasting Producers lobbies in Washington, why not move the demand for greater minority participation in public broadcasting a few steps up the priority list? NAMAC ostensibly devoted an entire conference in 1984 to the issue of democratization. It is too early to tell whether NAMAC, at its September working conference in Los Angeles, will actually *work* on implementing last year's call for democratization. This can be a cliquish group, where information, access, and contacts mean power—shared by a surprisingly small number of people and organizations that seem to reproduce themselves. By our insularity, we may be reinforcing the colonialization of cultures, rather than aiding the important work by minority producers and minority media centers in quest of visibility and self-determination.

WHAT BECOMES A LEGEND MOST?

Debra Goldman

The Legend of Maya Deren: Volume I, Part One: Signatures
by VeVe A. Clark, Millicent Hodson, and Catrina Neiman
New York: Anthology Film Archives, 1984, 514 pp., $40.00 cloth, $22.50 paper



Eleanora Deren Bardacke leads the 1936 May Day parade in New York City.

Everyone knows the still from *Meshes of the Afternoon.* The image is of Maya Deren, face and hands pressed to a windowpane, reflections of the outside world framing her inward gaze. Although captured by her husband and film mentor, Alexander Hammid, that image has become the symbol of Maya Deren, creative artist and filmmaker. And Deren herself, in life a tireless publicist for independent cinema, has emerged as the "mother" of the American avant-garde film movement.

But, as the creators of *The Legend of Maya Deren* point out, Deren, *nee* Eleanora Derenkowski, resembled that photograph very little. In contrast to its delicate, Botticellian beauty, Deren was short and stocky, her face wide and rounded—more Russian peasant than Renaissance *princessa.* Nor did she usually exhibit the photo's contemplative calm. The woman depicted in this book was dynamic, aggressive, capable, and ambitious. The contradiction between inward-looking artist and outward-directed achiever, the authors say, lured them to their mammoth undertaking.

The Legend of Maya Deren proved less a research project than a vocation for its three editors, VeVe A. Clark, Millicent Hodson, and Catrina Neiman. In the course of their work, the project mushroomed from a single volume reader into a four-tomed opus. The first part of Volume I, *Signatures,* took 10 years from conception to publication. Still, its 500-plus pages only cover Deren's child- and young womanhood, stopping short of her meeting with Hammid. Those interested in her years of intensive filmmaking, 1942–1947, will have to wait—perhaps a long time—for the second part of Volume I, *Chambers.* The second volume, *Ritual,* will follow Deren to Haiti where she went in 1947 to shoot a film never completed. Volume III will be divided into *Haiku,* the chronicle of her life to her sudden death, caused by a cerebral hemorrhage, in 1961, and *Echoes,* commentary and recollections of friends and colleagues, a filmography, and bibliography. Should this grand scheme be realized, Maya Deren may become the most thoroughly documented filmmaker in the U.S., living or dead, inside Hollywood or out.

It would be easy to accuse the creators of *The Legend* of overscrupulousness, even obsession, in their odyssey. They anticipate these objections, admitting they are "certain to be criticized for publishing in the raw so many of one person's documents." But Deren's own writings are only the half of what's assembled here. We are treated to facsimile reproductions of professorial comments on sophomore papers and of the authors' scholarly correspondence. We follow them on their research journeys and are privy to personal relationships with their sources. We read interviews replete with "um"s, "ah"s, and "really?"s.

This exhaustive effort, however maddening, is not the product of naive enthusiasm, but of self-conscious method. "We cannot apologize for the amount of material in these pages," they solemnly declare.

> That is how Deren lived. What gives motion to it all—the countless documents and the tales told by the documentors—is the chronology...the rhythm she created in life. It was this motion as much as the material itself that we wanted to share....

The resulting text provides an open sea of documents in which no distinctions are made between "important" and "marginal" materials, where an astrologer who never met Deren figures as prominently as her mother. Writing as women to "honor the life" of another they consider "a model our generation is seeking," the authors reject critical distance as one of the patriarchal forms of conventional biographical scholarship. Refusing to make definitive interpretive judgments, they even relinquish scholarly authority by sharing every scrap of information they encountered so that their readers "will find in the work a tool of their own."

That's the rub. For the reader who goes fishing in these waters for conclusions of her own finds a young woman whose life is at odds with the ethos of her documentors. Like others before and since, Deren broke many of the taboos that face women as artists, thinkers, and lovers. As she matured, the authors tell us, she became more self-conscious of the tensions entailed in her woman/artist role. But read on its own, this volume of *The Legend* sets before us an unvarnished striver, who believed that "men are more like me or rather vice versa" and sought mastery in every field and relationship. Curiously, despite the many introductions and intertextual comments in which the authors envelop the documents, this abundant and provocative evidence flows by virtually without direct commentary, swept up in the larger goal of valorizing the "model." The notion of "heroine" probably would have appealed to Deren, who, as the editors tell it, contributed gladly to the creation of her own "legend." Problems arise when they ascribe to the notion as well, with the result that their book inflates what their text debunks.

Deren, who made much of her slavic blood throughout her life, was actually a Ukrainian Jew, born to Solomon and Marie Fiedler Derenkowski in Kiev in 1917. As such, the family was a relative social anomaly: urban, university educated, professional, secular. Pogroms convinced the Derenkowskis to leave the civil war-ravaged Ukraine in 1922 and join relatives in upstate New York. Theirs was not the typical Jewish immigrant saga; within a few years, Solomon, a doctor of "mental hygiene," had deslavicized the family name, received his U.S. ac-

creditation, and taken a post at the State School for Mental Defectives in Syracuse. There the Derens slipped easily into middle-class respectability: a two-story house, a maid paid by the state, a dog named Pal.

This American idyll was abruptly suspended when mother Marie, who apparently never shared a compatible moment with her husband since their wedding day, left for Europe to "think things over," taking 12-year old Elinka in tow. The parents' domestic discord was the daughter's opportunity. Eleanora enrolled at the League of Nations's *Ecole Internationale* in the Geneva suburbs, where she embraced the cosmopolitan atmosphere with pubescent fervor. At school, Eleanora found the perfect stage for her precocity. Letters to her mother (who lived in Geneva and later in Paris, but never once visited her daughter's school) are filled with schoolgirl accomplishments and small triumphs: the girls hail Eleanora a "sure poet," she begins a fad for writing diaries, she is losing weight, she is published in the school newspaper, she attracts the boys. "Aren't you pleased?" "Aren't you proud of me?" she repeatedly asks her mother, who seemingly seldom was. These pleas for approval from an anxious daughter are also the self-assertions of a girl who found "fun"—a common Elinka word—in being powerful. As she herself explained in a letter to her "Alter-Ego" at 21, hers was not "the desire to impress so much as the instinct to assert, to partake of, to share, to indulge in life... [and] live vitally with [people]." Throughout a varied career, "living vitally" was Deren's one life-long preoccupation.

Eleanora returned to the U.S. from Switzerland to attend Syracuse University in 1933 with, as her aunt put it, "many ideas of her own." Although Syracuse was dull after Europe, she characteristically gravitated to the campus hot spot: left politics. At the Social Problems Club, she met Gregory Bardacke, a labor organizer and passionate politico who ran the Norman Thomas campaign in Syracuse. After their 1935 marriage, Deren plunged into political work under her husband's aegis. By the time the two separated two and a half years later, she had established an activist career of her own, serving as national secretary of the Young People's Socialist League and surrounded by political friends who barely knew Bardacke. Single once more at 21, she drifted into political and romantic liaisons with New York's small but vociferous band of Trotskyites, even penetrating their inner circle, the men's club of theorists. But within months of writing a paper on the "Russian Question" with lover Dan Eastman (Max's son), she had abandoned politics for the literary life.

In the context of *Signatures,* Deren's "Dear Comrade" correspondence reads like a detour; intimations of her adult interests can be found in her early fascination with psychology, possession, and the occult, as well as her carefully cultivated gypsy-earthmother persona. Receiving a bracelet as a gift from a Genevan schoolchum, she promptly wore it above the elbow, explaining in a thank you letter,

> Something of the mad paganism of it, the wild gesture of barbarism, the rejection of convention that it symbolizes, fascinates me... Little things like burning incense, or lying in the shadows of the lilac bush in our yard, nude, in the summer night's shower. These are really me.

Long before she found her filmmaker's vocation she had perfected the Greenwich Village bohemian style.

Not until Deren encountered dancer and choreographer Katherine Dunham in New York in 1940–41, however, did she grasp how that persona might serve an artistic career. Dunham, an anthropologist with a degree from the University of Chicago, had achieved fame as a performing artist, one of the few arenas in the thirties in which a Black and a woman could achieve any status. Dunham's technique and choreography—a synthesis of her scholarship, physical talents, and Black awareness—explored the connections between dance and ritual, drawing from African and Caribbean sources. With characteristic hustle, Deren concocted an impressive resume out of her Grub Street odd jobs and proposed a collaboration on a literary project to Dunham. That never materialized, but Dunham did take Deren with her company on the tour of the Broadway show *Cabin in the Sky*. Deren was Miss Dunham's part-time chauffeur, took care of her business correspondence, worked on her publicity, helped secure her rooms in whites-only hotels, and loved every Benzedrine-hyped minute. Once in the midst of taking dictation, Dunham's husband remembered, she gazed up at the dancer with tears in her eyes and cried, "You're writing about what I want to write about." When she left Dunham in 1942 to live and work with Hammid, she had a much keener grasp of the interests later evident in her films and writings: ritual, possession, dance, and Haitian Voudoun. The essay, "Religious Possession in Dancing," written on the road with Dunham, brings the reader's long documentary voyage to a close.

This abbreviated narrative should not be confused with what *Signatures* is about. If we take the editors at their word, *all* the materials gathered in this volume are necessary to the recreation of the indivisible whole of Deren's experience. But many of the readers willing to wade through the book will use it as a resource for an analysis of Deren's life and work. Whoever does so will hopefully look closely at the document's revelations of the complex connection between Deren's sexuality and creativity and examine how these relations reverberated in her filmmaking practice and theory. Deren found men a great resource in her search for the "vital life," and the ebb and flow of her romances strongly influenced the changing directions of her artistic career. "She went after anybody, including someone who belonged to someone else," Dunham recollected without evident malice. "She worked at it. I think sex was her great ace." What men provided Deren was above all a heightened, more powerful experience of herself. She wrote a friend in 1941:

> I do not want a man to tell me he loves me. I want to know it from some incomparably authentic vision on his part, some gesture which will make me feel beautiful... I want him to love the seaweed I bring him in my hands; I want him to lose himself in the drums I play for him; I want him to weep when I sing a Russian song... I love him for he has partaken in ecstasy; I am proud that I can create it.

Deren often wrestled with the role that men and her need for male attention played in her life. "Why is it that contact with others makes me articulate?" she once asked her alter ego. "Often women do not stimulate me to impress them, so I do not articulate in their presence. Men do stimulate me because there is probably dominant in my life that sort of sexual drive." Perhaps, she concluded, "the reason I leave one man for another so rapidly is that once I have impressed a man to my satisfaction, I am not stimulated to impress him any more and have to find someone new to impress." Her relationships with lover-mentors, Bardacke and Hammid, bear out some of her insights. In both cases she set out to "impress" them, first learning their worlds, and then supplanting them in the male universes of politics and creativity. *She* became the famous artist and symbol of the avant-garde, the protean hero-creator in flamboyant gypsy skirts.

Just as the individual documents in *Signatures* derive meaning from their total context, *Signatures* cannot truly be evaluated without its companion volumes. But given the economics of producing such complex books, filled with photos and facsimiles, it may be years, even decades, for the whole of *The Legend* to appear. Other than this partial documentary biography, there is no book-length study of Deren. A less ambitious, more accessible single volume account might well have been a more effective tribute to the woman the editors so admire.

Instead, Clark, Hodson, and Neiman attempted the ultimate biography in their desire to recreate "the life [Deren] actually led," the "tactile" and "visual" sensations of her world: the body of the text as the resurrected body of the woman. Even as they strive to give us multi-sensory intuitions of Deren, their materials invite not intuitive comprehension but analysis. The result is a book at cross purposes with itself, a passive act of scholarship that comes to fruition as a resource for an active, analytical mind—an odd homage to a woman like Maya Deren.

MIAMI ADVICE: 1985 INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



First-class hotels, tanned, bejeweled matrons, and stars like Cliff Robertson help create the glitzy ambience of the Miami International Film Festival.
Courtesy Thomson/Holtzman, Inc

D.S. Moore

The Miami Film Festival, which will launch its third year with more than 30 films during the week of February 7–16, 1986, fashions itself a major port of entry for foreign films. "Miami is the door to Latin America, not only for Spanish films, but for other European pictures as well," said art house entrepreneur Nat Chediak, who organizes the festival with University of Miami film professor Stephen Bowles and the Film Society of Miami. The first two festivals featured films from Spain, France, Italy, and Eastern Europe, and attracted an equally cosmopolitan press corps. Critic Bill Cosgrove's reviews in the *Miami Herald* were read throughout the Caribbean Basin, and much of the rest of Latin America could hear about the festival compliments of Voice of America's Spanish language broadcasts. As more than half the audience is Hispanic, it is a natural showcase for Latin cinema. But, as the VOA connection suggests, the politics of selected Latin films tends to be more right than left. You won't find any films sympathetic to Castro or the Sandinistas at the Miami Film Festival.

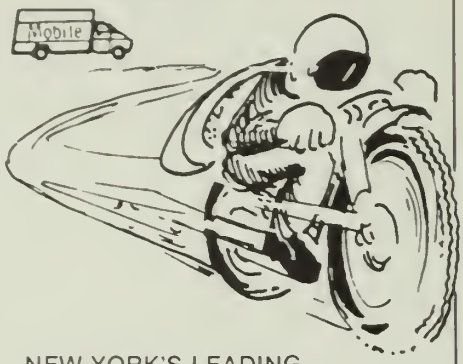
The budget for the 1984 festival, subtitled "For the Love of Film," was $250,000; the 1985 budged reached $500,000. According to festival publicist Baird Thompson, "$750,000 is the working budget for next year's festival—an event of similar size but with more staff and services for the international guests and increased events for the South Florida community." Funding for the prosperous festival comes from a winning combination of corporate, government, and individual sponsors, all of whom receive publicity, business benefits, and/or invitations to the lavish parties which are becoming an institution during festival week. Miami, Coral Gables, Dade County, and State government agencies, plus a consortium of hotels, airlines, and TV stations, each donate more than $25,000. This group, the nexus of the gigantic South Florida tourist industry, clearly perceives the film festival as a shot in the arm for the city's cultural image.

In the past, U.S. independents have received only a small piece of this lavish action, although their absence was offset a bit in 1985 by the choice of local producer Victor Nunez's *A Flash of Green* for opening night and the Coen brothers' *Blood Simple* for closing night ceremonies. Besides these popular independent productions, only five other U.S. independent films have been featured: *Variety, Liquid Sky,* and Florida filmmaker Carter Lord's *The Enchanted* in 1984; Paul Morrissey's *Mixed Blood* and Eleanor Gaver's *Hearts and Diamonds* in 1985. Bette Gordon recalled that the affluent Miami patrons of the festival were as intrigued by her new wave hairstyle as by her unorthodox film. "The first response of the audience after the screening of *Variety* was, 'Can I have my five dollars back? I didn't see a movie.'"

When asked about the dearth of U.S. independents at the festival, director and programmer Chediak replied that he keeps his "ear to the ground" for U.S. independents by keeping in touch with distributors and filmmaker friends such as Nunez and John Sayles. But he admitted that he has never selected a film which was sent unsolicited to the festival. "I've never received that kind of surprise in the mail. Most of them are unwatchable." Instead, Chediak travels throughout Europe and South America in search of quality product. He also attends the Independent Feature Market, which is held concurrently with the New York Film Festival, the only festival Chediak patronizes regularly. "I hate the hectic atmosphere at film festivals. I prefer to come into a city and watch some films in a more relaxed setting." He sees about eight films for every one he selects, and described his taste as "eclectic." He also insisted that his "emphasis is on quality," but it helps if that quality comes in one of the Romance languages—French, Spanish, or Italian.

What Have I Done to Deserve This?, directed by the Spaniard Pedro Aldomovar and one of Chediak's favorite selections in 1985, gives an accurate idea of the nature of Chediak's eclecticism. Chediak also admires *A Flash of Green,* because it is "crammed with novelistic detail" but "radical in its own way." He has great respect for the "economy of means" of U.S. independents, who he feels could teach the majors something about shooting a film cheaply. "The fact that Alan Rudolph can make *Choose Me* for less than $1,000,000 is important." As for including more U.S. independents at future festi-

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vals, publicist Thompson said that "the recent resurgence of American independents makes us very interested in courting and attracting them."

Independent filmmakers chosen by the festival may find Miami a great place to make deals. Gordon reported that she sold the home video rights to *Variety* in Miami. With the profits from that deal she was able to blow up the film from 16mm to 35mm and send it to Cannes. Gordon's Cannes connection was made in Miami, too, over literary dinners with Alain Robbe-Grillet, Luc Beraud, and Jacques Demy.

The flip side is that a bad reception for an unknown film can result in disaster. One filmmaker, who wished to remain anonymous, remembered that a negative press screening abruptly soured the festival's charms. "The focus of the festival was not the filmmakers. The social events did not contribute to making connections. We were all put into different hotels. Chediak was trying to please the people who donated to the festival and trying to please the filmmakers at the same time. There were big parties every night, but they were for the dowagers, not the filmmakers." The filmmaker also commented, "The organizers were not very supportive of me. They were not accessible. Once the film got negative feedback at the press screening, everyone turned off to me. The festival was never behind me."

Miami's material support of filmmakers is much more consistent, as generous sponsors allow the festival to be equally generous to the selected guests. Since the festival is good medicine for the intermittently ailing Florida tourist industry, the hotels and airlines provide a blizzard of in-kind services. "We never spend money unless we have to," said Chediak. "In 1985, we flew in and lodged nearly 100 producers, actors, directors, and distributors. We encourage distributors to come down. They get complimentary airfare and accommodations if they supply us with a film, since we can make $2,000 to $3,000 in admission revenues for one of their films." He also pointed out that at least one third of the films at the 1985 festival did not have a distributor.

The filmmakers who trekked to Florida in February testified to this royal treatment. One filmmaker noted, "If a free vacation is what you're looking for, it's great. But Miami lacks the intensity of most festivals, where you watch films all day, and everyone stays at the same hotel. We ended up doing a lot of sightseeing at tacky places."

Independents who go to Miami in 1986 will likely find an unusually conservative community of filmgoers, mixed with a small subculture of French, Spanish, exiled Cuban, and American cineastes flown in for the occasion. "It's not like Berlin, where you know everyone," observed Bette Gordon. "There weren't any of my contemporaries in Miami." With money flowing in from a host of entrenched private, business, and government sources, Chediak's position as festival director is somewhat delicate. Although he believes that "politics and art are uneasy bedfellows" in film, and that he searches for quality first and foremost, Chediak is not above pleasing his generally right-of-center sponsors, as a quick glance at the documentaries screened in the festival's first two years shows: *Improper Conduct, The Other Cuba,* and *Ballad of the Little Soldier.* Those who espouse different ideologies must content themselves with the best features of Miami's young festival—tropical sun, a serious interest in contemporary cinema, and quality foreign films on their way to major American cities.

Deadline: December 1. No fee. Festival pays return shipping for entries. No restrictions on running time, including shorts. Format: 16mm or 35mm; ¾", VHS, and Beta accepted for preselection. Write for entry forms and send prints, tapes, and promotional material to the Miami Film Festival, Film Society of Miami, 1901 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Coral Gables, FL 33134. (305) 444-FILM.

D.S. Moore is a New York City-based freelance writer specializing in film criticism.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement,** and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

● *GLOBAL VILLAGE DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL,* NYC, Apr. 18–27. 12th annual video, television & film documentary festival will be presented for the second time by Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival at the Public Theater. Works can originate in any format, but submissions will be accepted in ¾" and 16mm only. Cash prizes & honorable mentions will be awarded to the best of fest & selected works will tour nationally. Deadline: Nov. 15. Fee: $10. For applications contact: Celia Chong, Global Village, 454 Broome St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 966-7526.

● *ITVA VIDEO FESTIVAL,* Dallas, April 19. 18th annual showcase for industrial productions organized by the International Television Association, a membership group of over 1,500 primarily nonbroadcast video professionals. Golden & Silver Reels given in 5 categories: information, sales marketing/motivational, public service/public relations, organization news & interactive video—the fastest

growing category. In a two-step process, last year's 800-plus entries were narrowed to about 150; the Blue Ribbon panel then awarded about 20 Reels. Winning programs available free through the ITVA Video Network. Work is judged for message design & creativity, with minor emphasis on production values to compensate for disparate budgets. Work must originate or be posted in video. Submit entries on ¾". Fees: ITVA members $50 per entry, non-members $95, students $25. For forms contact: 18th Annual Video Festival, ITVA, Suite 110-LB51, 6311 N. O'Conner Rd., Irving, TX 75039.

● *KINETIC IMAGE FILM GROUP,* St. Petersburg, FL, Nov. 23. The stated purpose of this event is "to encourage film production (amateur & independent) & increase public awareness of non-feature filmmaking through open screenings & the exchange of ideas between filmmakers." Non-commercial films in S-8, 8mm, or 16mm. Max. running time 30 min. Kinetic Image Film Award for best film & 3 placement awards. All entries receive certificates. Additional audience choice award. Fee: $10 for first entry; $5 for each additional. Send film in reusable mailing container. 2" leader on head requested. Separate reels for each entry. Label case & reels. Send SASE for receipt acknowledgement. Official form not required. Include name, title, address, phone, year completed, exact running time, gauge, speed, original or print, type of sound, comments & permission for non-commercial cable & promotional airing. Public screenings at University of South Florida. Deadline: Nov. 2. Contact: Mr. & Mrs. Richard Clabaugh, Kinetic Image Film Group, Inc., Box 11465, St. Petersburg, FL 33733; (813) 525-5277.

FOREIGN

● *AMATEUR FILM FESTIVAL OF GUIMARAES,* Portugal, Dec. 16–22. 16th annual competition for non-affiliated producers. Awards Golden Castle grand prize, additional gold, silver & bronze medals & honorable mentions. Films welcome in S-8, 8mm & 16mm in black & white or color, silent, or optical or magnetic sound. Multiple entries welcome. Special awards for youth themes. All competitors who get through pre-selection receive "participation medal." Send script in English for simultaneous translation. Fee: $10 payable by check to CONVIVIO-Associacao Cultural e Recreativa. Send entry forms & films to: Festival Internacional de Cinema do Amadores de Guimaraes CONVIVIO, Associacao Cultural e Recreativa, 4 800 Guimaraes, Portugal; tel. 414472; telex 32499 XAVI P. Films mailed for return by Dec. 31. Forms available at AIVF (send SASE).

● *BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL (JUNGFORUM),* W. Germany, February. As one part of the Berlin Film Festival (the others are the international competition, the market & the information section), the Jungforum's niche, created by Ulrich Gregor, his wife Erika, colleague Alf Bold & others, is the presentation of new directors, independent & non-commercial films. According to *Variety,* last year's record-breaking Jungforum screenings attracted up to 100,000 to see 150 films. Robert Altman's *Secret Honor,* Britisher Ken Loach's miners doc *Which Side Are You On?,* Eric Mitchell's *The Way It Is* & Ken Kobland's *The Communists Are Comfortable* were screened. Festival directors in attendance included Gian Luigi Rondi from Venice, Serge Losique from Montreal, Kay Armitage & David Overby from Toronto, David Streiff from Locarno, Everhard Hauff from Munich, Rod Webb from Sydney. The Gregors will be in New York Oct. 8–20 scouting for the forum. Their itinerary includes the Independent Feature Project [see July/Aug. "In Brief"]. They'll be at the Mayflower Hotel, Central Park W. & 61st St., (212) 265-0600. New York agent for the Berliniade is Gordon Hitchens, 214 W. 85th St., #3W, New York, NY 10024; (212) 877-6856, 362-0254.



"The Way It Is" was seen by the record-breaking crowds at last year's Berlin Film Festival Jungforum.
Courtesy filmmaker

● *FESTIVAL DES FILLES DES VUES,* Quebec, March. Formerly La Video Fameuse Fete, presented by the women's production collective Video Femmes, this 10th anniversary event lasts 5 days & nights & presents the newest film & video works produced or co-produced by women from around the world. 80% of the festival is devoted to new Canadian & particularly Quebequoise productions. In 1986 the collective will present 4 new works. 2 highlights from the 1985 were the feature *Chicken Ranch* & the special guest participation of Sally Potter from England. Film & video screenings at the Bibliotheque attracted over 3,000. TV & Montreal press cover the event. Narratives, documentaries, experimental & animated films of any length, subject & genre are welcome in 16mm, 35mm & ¾". The festival is not limited to women's issue programming. French is the language of Quebec & there are no simultaneous translations, so works with substantial English soundtracks will probably not be selected. The festival subsidizes transportation & accommodations for participating producers, who have the opportunity to discuss their work after screenings. Festival director Johanne Fornier may be in New York in Nov. to look for work. Deadline: Dec. For information & forms: Video Femmes, 56 St. Pierre, #203, Quebec GIK 4A1, Canada; tel. (418) 692-3090.

● *INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA & VIDEO,* Havana, Dec. 2–16. 7th annual competition, sponsored by the Cuban Film Institute, "shows films produced in and about Latin America" in addition to holding special events, retrospectives & seminars. In an effort to attract guests from U.S. ($975 covers RT airfare Miami-Havana, 15 days room & board), there will be a special conference on recent Cuban filmmaking with daily film screenings & get-togethers with directors, cinematographers, actors & critics. The competition is for either Latin American & Caribbean films or films about Latin America & the Caribbean produced outside the area. This year they are sponsoring a competition for best feature film script by Latin American or Caribbean filmmaker. 3 Coral awards are presented for best feature, documentary & animated film; additional awards are given for acting, script, cinematography, set design, music & editing. Other international film organizations sponsor additional awards. Formats: 35mm & 16mm, U-Matic video, Betamax NTSC. With application forms, send bio, script in English or Spanish & any additional promotional material. Video OK for pre-selection. Other events will include a market, a section on British independent cinema & meetings of various international film clubs & filmmaker organizations. Deadline: Oct. 15. Festival covers return shipping. Address: ICAIC/International Film Distribution, Calle 23 No 1155, Plaza de la Revolucion, Habana 4, Cuba; tel. 3-4400; telex 5711419 ICAIC CU. For information & forms contact: Sandra Levinson or Naomi Freedman, Center for Cuban Studies, 124 W. 23rd St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 242-0559.

● *LA PLAGNE ADVENTURE FILM FESTIVAL,* France, Dec. 12–15. This 10-year old event is held at the ski resort of La Plagne in the French Alps & travels to the "Forum de l'Adventure" in Paris. It celebrates the "spirit of adventure," risk & achievement in sport, humanitarianism, science, technology & exploration. Selected films compete for a grand prize, jury & press awards & honorable mentions. Previous U.S. winners have included *El Capitan, Sky Dive, Flyers & Doctora.* Jury consists of "men & women whose lives are dedicated to adventure, in one way or another." TV producers & buyers attend La Plagne looking for production partners. Covered by over 100 journalists. Manufacturers & businesses are invited to sponsor grants for adventure expeditions. Format: 16mm & 35mm. ¾" NTSC accepted for pre-selection. Deadline: Nov. 15. Fest pays RT shipping for selected films. Forms available at AIVF (send SASE). Contact: Sylvie Barbe, Guilde Europenne du Raid, 11 rue de Vaugirard, 75006 Paris, France; tel. (1) 43.26.97.52; telex WAGVOY 290.716 F.

CORRECTION

At the Columbus Film Festival, it is not the policy to guarantee each filmmaker a plaque or honorable mention, as reported in July/Aug."In Brief." In 1984, 33% of the entries did not receive awards.

IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION

Mary Guzzy





Left: The Jewish R sistance fighters the Vilna ghetto Lithuania, from Aviv Kempner and Jos Waletzky's "Partisan of Vilna."
Courtesy filmmakers

Right: Internation signs and symbo form a video collag in Julie Harrison recently complete "Correspondence."
Photo: Robert Kleyn

In the 1980s, independent film and video production companies are forming with the frequency and energy that characterized the birth of Off-off Broadway and regional theater in the sixties or the years before Hollywood monopolized cinema. One example is Les Blank's California-based company, Flower Films, which recently announced completion of **Cigarette Blues,** a six-minute music short featuring Sonny Rhodes and the Texas Twisters. Portions of four other projects in production were previewed at the Telluride Festival in September. Among these are a one-hour film, as yet untitled, on Serbian music and its importance in Serbian-American culture, filmed over a two-year period at churches, bars, and picnics in Serbian-American communities in Chicago and California. Another project, a half-hour film on gap-toothed women, could renew interest in the science of physiognomy, which analyzes personality traits according to physical characteristics. Filmmaker and folklorist Chris Simon, who has worked with Blank on many projects, said the filmmaker's interest in gap-toothed women goes back a few years. "As a boy, Les was fascinated by Chaucer's bawdy Wife of Bath. A teacher told him that gap-toothed women were said to be sensual and passionate about living. Being a healthy adolescent, that stuck in his mind." According to Simon, the film will focus on "how women have dealt with what is considered an imperfection," and will contain interviews with such spacey ladies as model Lauren Hutton.

New England's young but prolific Florentine Films announces completion of **The Shakers: Hands to Work, Hearts to God,** a one-hour documentary that premiered on public television in August. Directed by Ken and Amy Burns, *The Shakers* is a film history of the celibate Christian group that gave America the round barn, the circular saw, the clothespin, and unsurpassed furniture designs. Founded in the 1700s, the Shakers (who once sold most of the opium used in the U.S.) believed in the equality of all people and became Friedrich Engels's model for communism. Today only about nine Shakers survive, and interviews with some of them are included in the film, interspersed with archival materials and set to a soundtrack arranged from over 10,000 Shaker hymns. The film won a 1985 Cine Golden Eagle and an American Film Festival Blue Ribbon. The Burnses are currently in the final stages of production on two other documentaries, **The Statue of Liberty** and **Huey Long.**

Producers at Skyline Films in Evanston, Illinois, conducted two years' research before incorporating this past spring to begin developing their first project. Bearing the working title **The Naked Lady,** the film will tell the fictional story of female stand-up comic and will star an actual comedienne, whose own life experience will contribute to the development of the screenplay. Producer Matthew Moore anticipates the 35mm project will commence shooting in the summer of 1986 in the Chicago area. It will be directed by Joanna Milter and shot by Stephan Fopeano, both of the Northwestern University Film School. Funding, budgeted at $450,000, is being raised through a limited partnership. Moore predicts that Skyline will not be a one feature company and will grow to become a general partner in other projects. Like many new producers, the Skyline folks have opted to "stay away from Hollywood and that whole style."

Filmmaker Gus Van Sant plans a December release for a 16mm black and white feature entitled **Mala Noche,** made for a mere $16,000. Based on a 1977 novella by Portland, Oregon writer/poet Walt Curtis, the story tells of wino grocery store owner's obsessive relationship with two Mexican street kids. Van Sant, who left Hollywood and the Madison Avenue commercial factory to make the film in the Portland area, has been working on the project since 1983. A documentary-size crew headed by cameraperson John Campbell helped Van Sant realize his cinematic vision, along with author Curtis, who worked closely on the script and plays a cameo role in the film.

The major characters are played by regional theater actors and novices with no professional acting experience. "Some of the small roles are played by winos we literally pulled off the street, and they were very good—perhaps because so much acting goes on in street life," said the director. *Mala Noche* will be offered for theatrical release after entry in several major festivals. First choice for the film's premiere is the New York Gay Film Festival in December.

Kent Paul of the Playhouse Repertory Company in New York has crossed over into the film world with his first documentary, **Sanford Meisner: The Theater's Best-Kept Secret.** Certain to be a landmark for professional and academic acting programs across the country, the one-hour piece captures master teacher Sanford Meisner, now 80, still hard at work training young actors for theater and films. A founding member of the Group Theater in the thirties, Meisner has survived a near-fatal car accident, removal of his larynx, and the Brandoization of Stanislavsky's Method. Former students Sidney Pollack, executive producer of the documentary, Joanne Woodward, John Voight, Lee Grant, and David Mamet, among others, appear in interviews conducted by Stephen Harvey, assistant film curator of the Museum of Modern Art. These are interspersed with footage of Meisner teaching and talking about the craft of acting and his life as it relates to his work. Director Paul, also a former student of Meisner, finds that filmmaking has "caught my imagination" and is currently preparing to direct a feature. Meanwhile, *The Theater's Best-Kept Secret* is scheduled to appear on public television as part of an upcoming series on the Group Theater.

Videomaker and painter Julie Harrison of New York City's Machine Language is completing a 20-minute video story entitled **The Other Side.** A portrait of a woman's spiritual quest as symbolized by a lone journey to "the volcano," *The Other Side* was shot on location in New Mexico. Harrison has also recently completed two short musical video epigrams. **Progress,** an image-processed winter landscape set to music by George Elliott, attempts to synthesize "technology and the displacement of nature"; **Correspondence,** with music by Carol Parkinson, is a video collage of contemporary international signs and symbols.

New Yorker Zachary Winestine has completed postproduction of his seven-minute 16mm film entitled **On Some Consequences of a Passage Written by Guy DeBord.** Inspired by DeBord's exhortation to find new ways to use the urban landscape and "attack the separation between fantasy and everyday life," Winestine took his camera and climbed the catwalk to the top of the Brooklyn Bridge. He was subsequently arrested. All charges were later dropped when he promised never to do it again. *On Some Consequences...* is a chronicle of these events.

Producer Aviva Kempner and director Josh Waletzky have completed **Partisans of Vilna,** a feature-length documentary of the Jewish Resistance fighters from the Vilna ghetto in Nazi-occupied Lithuania during World War II. Once known as the Jerusalem of Lithuania, Vilna's teeming intellectual, cultural, and religious community was the soil from which a major part of the Jewish Resistance grew. Archival footage and interviews with survivors of the fight against the extermination of the people and culture of Vilna provides special insight into "the universal dilemma of how humans take responsibility for their lives under horrifying circumstances, when the choices on all sides are virtually hopeless." Kempner conceived the project in 1981 and obtained major funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities. In addition, she raised $200,000 from a variety of other sources. The finished film runs 133 minutes and cost more than $500,000, including distribution expenses.

Grappling with the Holocaust a generation later, videomaker Pier Marton has completed **Say I'm a Jew,** a 28-minute tape comprised of interviews with the conflict-ridden children of concentration camp survivors from France, Holland, Germany, and Eastern Europe now living in U.S. "The theme which surfaces again and again is the rejection of one's Jewishness because that identity is associated with persecution." Marton is now immersed in the production of a tape funded by a grant from the Translation '85 program administered by UCVideo of Minneapolis. Entitled **Hold It,** the project explores the social forces which encourage alienation between the sexes and will focus on the issue of violence. In the collaborative spirit encouraged by the Translation program, Marton is working with computer graphics artist Glenn Biegon and electronic composer Wendy Ultan.

DISTRIBUTION DIRECTORY:
Les Blank, Flower Films, 10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530, (415) 525-0942; *The Shakers: Hand to Work, Hearts to God:* Direct Cinema, Ltd., Box 315, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417, (201) 891-8240; Matthew Moore, Skyline Films, 1748 Sherman Ave., Ste. 1W, Evanston, IL 60201, (312) 491-6519; *Mala Noche:* Gus Van Sant, 11648 SW Military Lane, Portland, OR 97219, (503) 636-1929; *Sanford Meisner: The Theater's Best-Kept Secret:* Kent Paul, Playhouse Repertory Company, 155 E. 93rd St., #3F, New York, NY 10128, (212) 369-9395; *The Other Side:* Julie Harrison, Machine Language, 321 W. 44 St., #402, New York, NY 10036, (212) 757-2740; *On Some Consequences of a Passage Written by Guy DeBord:* Zachary Winestine, 190 Bleecker St., New York, NY 10012, (212) 982-8545; *Partisans of Vilna:* Aviva Kempner, Ciesla Productions, Inc., 1707 Lanier Pl. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009, (202) 462-7528; *Say I'm a Jew:* Pier Marton, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Video Area, Columbus Drive at Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60603, (312) 443-3772.

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● *FOR SALE:* Surplus 16mm color reversal filmstock, ECO 7252, 50 (100') rolls @ $9/100'; EF 7242 4 (400') rolls, 82 (100') rolls @ $8/100'. Stock in good cond., samples available. Mark Mori, Box 5202, Station E, Atlanta, GA 30307, (404) 627-2485.

● *FOR SALE:* ¾" off-line editing system w/ 2 Sony 2860's w/ convergence ECS-16 & digital tape timer, $2000. David Sinamore, (212) 582-5265, NYC.

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● *FOR RENT:* New Panasonic ½" VHS-NV 8500 editing system, incl. NV A-500 controller, 2 decks & 2 12" monitors. Rental: weekly, $600; monthly, $1300. Kathleen, (212) 293-2000, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Nagra 111, no sync, $800. Arri-S pkg. w/ Zeiss 12.5–75, 50mm Cooke lens, 2 400' mags, var. spd. mtr., battery & case, $1900. (414) 263-7478, WI.

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● *FOR SALE:* Sony D-6 cassette recorder modified for crystal sync by TFG. Excellent qual/cond. (w/ piggy-back adaptor/strap/case/power supply), $500. (201) 333-8695, NJ.

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● *FOR SALE:* Edison cylinder phonograph (w/ horn, 4 disks), no needle, working condition, collector's item, $300. Used 16mm 1200' metal reels & cans, at ½ list price. (212) 749-1250, weekdays 9 to 5, NYC.

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● *FOR SALE:* Sony DXC 1810 camera with Beta portapak VTR & batteries, AC power supply, cables & case. All equipment in excellent condition. $1900. Sony SLO 383 editing Beta VTR. $1950. Ron, (212) 697-7800, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Steenbeck, 8-plate, 2 picture head. Finley-Hill soundbox. Rent: $500–650/month. Sale: $13,000. (415) 864-6714, CA.

● *FOR SALE:* Cannon Scoopic 16mm, mint condition w/ crystal, 400' adaptor, 2 400' mags, extra batteries, case. $1500 or best offer. Jack, (202) 885-2040, DC.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony VO 4800 w/BVU modification, BP 60 battery, under 75 hrs. record time, no playback use. Mint cond., $1950. Also EV 644 super cardioid mic, v.g., $135. 3 gang 35mm–1 gang 16mm sync, $150. Marita Simpson, (212) 982-6054, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* 35 BL11, 16 S.R., Zeiss super speed lenses, Nagra recorder, 16mm 6-plate editing table. Film Friends, 16 E. 17th St., NYC 10003, (212) 620-0084.

● *FOR SALE:* Angenieux 12–120 lens; Canon 12–120 macro lens, like new; 1200' BL mag. Must sell. Price negotiable & very reasonable. Bill Wadsworth Prods., 2404 Rio Grande, Austin, TX 78705, (512) 478-2971.

● *FOR SALE OR RENT:* Computer motion control system for animation or optical effects. Microprocessor-controlled system incl. interface & stepping motors. Streaking effects, slit scan & repeatable moves. Priced right. Marc, (212) 689-7511, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* Locus Communications low-cost services for independent video production: multicamera pkgs., single camera units, special services for video installations, cameras, recorders & players, monitors, audio equipment & accessories. Membership: $25/yr. individuals, $50/yr. organizations to qualify for 40% discounts on rates. Contact: Locus Communications, 250 W. 57th St., Ste. 1229, NYC 10019, (212) 757-4220.

● *FOR SALE:* Must sell ASAP. Prefer package deal: JVC KY310 3-tube camera w/ broadcast quality boards, hardcase, 2 NiCad batteries, lights, AC adapter & new Portabrace case; Bogen fluid head tripod w/ dolly; JVC 4400U ¾" portable recorder w/ new battery & Portabrace case; JVC CR6300U ¾" recorder w/ tuner, audio dub & edit; JVC 6200 ½" portable recorder w/ AC adaptor charger, batteries, audio dub & video insert; JVC 2600 ½" portable w/tuner, battery, audio dub & video insert; Sanyo 6300 ½" Beta recorder; Hybrid 8 special effects generator; Mindset Hi-Resolution Computer w/ dual disc drive, joy stick, mouse & software incl. Time Arts Lumena, Designer, D.O.S. & GW-BASIC; Recoton Model V615 stereo color processor; 600w lights w/ case & stands, xtra bulbs & barndoors; 1000w lights w/case & stands; air-cooled 2000/1000w lights w/ stands, filters, doors & xtra bulbs. Pkg. also incl. mics, cable, misc. connectors, cases, bags, etc. All equipment in new to excellent condition, most manuals included. Entire pkg. $10,500. Video Events, 4620 Grove, Skokie, IL 60076, (312) 677-2578.

● *FOR SALE:* Modified Auricon (crystal, takes CP battery), body only, $900. W/ lens, inquire. Bolex barney-blimp, brand new, $200. Paul Hart, 625 Division, E. Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 351-2603.

● *FOR RENT:* 2 offices in downtown NYC. High floor w/ terrace overlooking Greenwich Village and Hudson River. Private entrance. Mail accepted by main office. Excellent for editing room & production office w/ conference & screening room & copying machine available. $750/month. Contact Louise Greaves, (212) 206-1213, NYC.

Conferences ● Workshops

● *IMAGINACTION, 9TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ALLIANCE FOR CULTURAL DEMOCRACY:* Meeting of community-based arts programs & activist artists in visual arts, theater, music, media, literature, dance, arts administration, etc. This year's theme: self-determination is cultural democracy in action. Registration, $45 ACD members, $55 nonmembers. Add $10 after 9/30/85. Oct. 11–14 in Chicago, IL. Contact Allen Schwartz, ACD, 2262 W. 119th Pl., Blue Island, IL 60406, (312) 388-3871.

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Send check or money order to: AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012; or call (212) 473-3400.

● *VIDEO EXPO:* Exhibits of the latest in video equipment & technology. Expanded seminar program w/ full & half-day sessions. Florida: Dec. 9-13, 1985, Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress, Orlando. Contact Sheila Alper, Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc., 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604, (914) 328-9157, or toll-free, (800) 248-KIPI.

● *INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS 1985-2000:* Conference on maximizing business profits & social benefits, sponsored by the Public Service Satellite Consortium & the Int'l Council for Planning and Innovation. Worldwide video conference linking the press, int'l government officials & telecommunications experts on 5 continents. Oct. 22-26, San Francisco, CA. Contact Carin Christian, (703) 437-0027, MD.

● *NATIONAL BLACK MEDIA COALITION 12TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE:* "Keeping Pace in a Changing Industry," Oct. 10-13, 1985, Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC. Incl. workshops on Blacks & news writing, advertising industry, news management, radio, public affairs programming, deregulation, communications & law, etc. Special discount to community groups. National Black Media Coalition, 516 U St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001, (202) 387-8155.

● *INDEPENDENT IMAGES CONFERENCE IN TEXAS:* A conference promoting the art & business of feature filmmaking in the Southwest, Oct. 25-27, 1985, Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin, TX. Agenda includes workshops in screenwriting, seminars on feature film financing, marketing & distribution, plus screenings of films, production workshop & presentations by independent feature support organizations. Sponsored by the Southwest Alternate Media Project, Houston; Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin & Fort Worth Productions, Fort Worth. Write IIC, c/o SWAMP, 1519 W. Main, Houston, TX 77006, (713) 522-8592/522-0165.

Editing Facilities

● *¾" EDITING/POSTPRODUCTION:* Left & independent documentaries our first love. Sony 5850 system, SMPTE time code, Microgen character generator, full sound mix, Ikegami & JVC cameras, Sony BVU 110 & 4800 decks. Post is $40/hr. w/ editor. 10% discount to AIVF members. Debbie or David, 29th Street Video, (212) 594-7530, NYC.

● *BEST BETACAM DEAL:* Production services, dubs, off-line editing. VTA, ARTS. (212) 255-1809, NYC.

● *NEGATIVE MATCHING:* 16mm, Super-16, 35mm cut for regular printing, blowup, or video transfer. Clean work at reasonable rates. One White Glove, Tim Brennan, (718) 897-4145, NYC.

● *16MM NEGATIVE MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut at reasonable rates. Bruce, (212) 228-7352, NYC.

● *FILM TITLE SERVICES:* Camera-ready art &/or shooting of titles. Many typefaces, design consultation, crawls. Reasonable rates, fast service. (212) 460-8921, NYC.

● *16MM EDITING & POSTPRODUCTION:* In sunny Oakland. 6-plate Euro-flatbed, 2 fully equipped benches & motorized sync; adjacent transfers, projection, narration recording & free parking. 24 hr. access. BAVC, FAF, AIVF discount. (415) 436-6978, CA.

● *¾" EDITING:* JVC 8250 w/ convergence controller, microgen character generator, $20/hr. Discounts for long-term projects. On Track Video, (212) 864-5166, NYC.

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● *QUALITY EDITING ROOM FOR LESS:* ¾" and VHS-to-¾" w/convergence Super 90 tape-handlers, adda TBC, fades, time code reader-generator, overdubs. New equipment, comfortable & friendly environment, Lincoln Center area. $20/hr. during business hours for AIVF members editing noncommercial projects. Experienced editors, scripting, Chyron also available. Hank Dolmatch, TV Enterprises, Inc., (212) 874-4524, NYC.

● *VHS EDITING:* ¾" sophistication audio equalization & mixing. Hi-speed search. Professional quality. Doug Ingber, (212) 923-4789, NYC.

● *TEXAS FILM & VIDEO EDITING:* 6-plate Moviola in comfortable cutting room w/ phone, fridge, sound transfers. Sony BVU-800 off-line & on-line editing. Affordable rates. Ron Zimmerman, Visual Evidence Inc., 411 Bonham-at-the-Alamo, San Antonio, TX, (512) 225-6708/299-1400.

● *BRODSKY & TREADWAY S-8 & 8MM FILM-TO-VIDEO TRANSFER MASTERS:* Scene-by-scene density & total color correction, variable speed & freeze frame, sound from any source. Artists & broadcasters like our work. By appointment only. Call (617) 666-3372, NA.

● *FILM-TO-TAPE:* 8mm to S-8 to tape, custom care for your originals & outstanding transfer quality; mastered to ¾" or ½" w/ non-synchronous or post-synch audio available. Audio recording w/ Nagra 4.2L & mics for interesting & unusual employment. Videotaping services from Amalgam Prods.; award-winning producers specializing in documentary reportage & arts documentation, w/ ¾" & ½" available. Paul Kornblueh, (212) 691-8298, NYC.

Films ● Tapes Wanted

● *MEET THE FILMMAKER:* Series at Brooklyn College Institute for Retired Professionals & International Center in NY (foreign gov. reps & others). Your presence, short films & promotional literature will help popularize your creations. Contact Sol Rubin (charter member AIVF), Box 40, NYC 10038.

● *VINCENT CHIN DOCUMENTARY:* Films, tapes, Super-8 footage covering nationwide Asian American community organizing around the Vincent Chin case, 1982-present. Also archival footage, home movies, etc. of Detroit Chinatown & Asian Americans. Negotiable fees. Contact Film News Now Fnd., 160 Fifth Ave., Suite 911, NYC 10010, (212) 243-2310.

● *EDUCATIONAL MOVIES:* ½-hr. educational films wanted for distribution to high schools. Programs marketed individually to specifically targeted segments of the high school market. Especially interested in programs on industrial arts, vocational education, career guidance, home economics & science. Send program description to: Circle Oak Productions, 260 Katonah Ave., Katonah, NY 10536, (914) 232-9551.

● *FRENCH NON-THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTOR* looking for sports films, traditional & novelty: car, motocycle, bike races, American rugby & football, sled dogs, etc. Contact American rep. Ruth J. Feldman, (213) 394-2984, 1433 10th St. #7, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

● *INDEPENDENT PRODUCER SEEKS FOOTAGE* of Vietnam veterans, protests, anti-war demonstrations, speeches & actions by Ron Kovic for *Born on the Fourth of July,* 16mm documentary portrait of Vietnam vet, author, activist Ron Kovic. Contact Loretta Smith, Flower of the Dragon Productions, 3635 N. Paulina St., Chicago IL 60613, (312) 327-8592.

● *16MM STOCK FOOTAGE* available on El Salvadoran rebels, Vietnam combat, Geraldine Ferraro, Jesse Jackson, nuke issues & more. Also wanted for distribution: 16mm & S-8 footage of newsworthy events & people. Contact News on Film, Paul Hart, 65 Division, E. Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 351-2603.

● *DISTRIBUTOR* looking for independent video & films to distribute world wide. Contact Bob McHatton at Tower Productions, 3002 Hennepin, Minneapolis, MN 55407.

Freelancers

● *VIDEO PRODUCTION/POSTPRODUCTION SPECIALIST:* Experienced in producing, directing, shooting & editing; studio & remotes. Willing to work with you or for you. Kingsley Allison, (212) 760-7695, days; (212) 893-7986, eves, NYC.

● *MAKE UP ARTISTS/HAIRDRESSER/WIGMASTER:* Experience in print, TV, film, stage & video. W/emphasis on period fashion (past, present & future). Estimates for design & production; portfolio, resume & reel available upon request. Freelance only. Contact Ron Lewis, (212) 242-3900, NYC.

● *COMPOSER FOR FILM:* International award winner. Classically trained, but not limited. Can score anything. Gerald Brennan, (313) 668-0016, MI.

● *EXPERIENCED & FAST DOCUMENTARY WRITER W/ SOLID CREDENTIALS:* Available for hire. Need a convincing proposal researched and written? A new concept? A first-class treatment? A just-right script? I've written an award-winning doc. for PBS, news features for ABC & MacNeil/Lehrer, educational film for National Geographic. References available. (305) 667-6779, FL.

● *FULL-SERVICE MEDIA CONSULTING:* Film, TV, radio, theater. Proposals, scripts, packaging, fundraising & national marketing campaigns, pitches & presentations to networks, cable companies, studios, foreign TV, funders (incl. corporations, foundations, individuals, CPB, NEH & NEA). Concept development to completed works. Also resume & personal market service for producers, directors, writers. Diversified clientele: int'l & first-time producers a specialty. Highly experienced. Demonstrated results. Barbara Sirota Prods., (212) 777-6011, NYC.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER/EX-DANCER:* Consultation & production services for dancers, low-budget broadcast production pkg., incl. DXC M3 camera; VHS or Beta documentation of rehearsals. ¾" editing $20/hr. Dubbing $12/hr. Penny Ward Video, (212) 228-1427/431-5282, NYC.

● *EXPERIENCED FILM SOUNDMAN:* Will work on your feature or documentary. Recordist, boom, or playback. Doug Tourtelot, (212) 489-0232, NYC.

● *EXPERIENCED FILM & TAPE PRODUCER:* 3 yrs w/ RAI (Italian public TV) in NYC. Willing to work as associate producer on independent features & documentary projects. References available upon request. Floriana Campanozzi, (212) 505-8772, NYC.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER:* W/ 16mm pkg. available for features, shorts, commercials, docs, music videos, etc. Call to see reel(s). Cathy Zheutlin, (213) 828-2525, CA.

● *ANIMATOR:* Experienced working w/ independents, title design, character animation a specialty. Storyboards. Reasonable rates for reasonable schedules. Sample reel available. John Baumann, (212) 533-4705/254-6300, x294 or 331, NYC.

● *EXPERIENCED RESEARCHER/SCRIPTWRITER:* Looking for projects. Have worked on anthropological ventures, researched Native Americans in Manhattan & presently writing a musical play. Ability in Spanish. Gwynne Vernet, 423 Broome St., NYC 10013, (212) 925-4114.

● *LOS ANGELES GAFFER/KEY GRIP:* 8 yrs experience in features, commercials, educational & industrial films. Location package available. Doug Cragoe, (818) 763-2400, CA.

● *KIND & REASONABLE MOVING COMPANY:* Production assistant w/van: $175 day. Wkly & hrly rates available. Household, airport, commercial. (212) 929-3570, NYC.

● *EXPERIENCED RESEARCHER/COORDINATOR:* For documentary or fictional projects. Award-winning track record. Joan Engel, 43 Spring St. NYC 10012, (212) 925-0403, NYC.

● *RESEARCHER/WRITER/LOCATION SCOUT:* Have worked w/ PBS documentaries, network news & special events depts & independent documentary & narrative projects. Able to read 1,000 wpm for quick backgrounds on any subject. Native New Yorker familiar w/ locations & research & production facilities in the tri-state area. Familiar w/ major cities abroad & able to consult on foreign locations. Functional French & Spanish. References available. Alyce Wittenstein, (212) 213-9047, NYC.

● *PROPOSAL DOCTORS:* Experienced producers help you get the money. (We've raised more than $1,000,000.) We'll edit, rewrite, polish your proposal, revise budgets & even give it that "professional look" w/ our word processor. Victoria or Michael, (718) 802-0002, NYC.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER* w/ Sony M3 camera & broadcast gear. Available to shoot news, documentary, dance, etc. Full ENG package & crew as needed, commercial vehicle. Negotiable rates. L. Goodsmith, (212) 989-8157, NYC.

● *COMPUTERIZED FILM/VIDEO BUDGET PREPARATION:* Producer/director w/ Ikegami 77, excellent cond. References on request. Reasonable per diem rates. Will travel. Computerized audio-visuals & more. P. Greg Alland, (212) 420-0953, NYC.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER:* W/ complete 16mm pkg.; experienced in all types of production. Fluent French & Spanish, free to travel, reels available. Pedro Bonilla, (213) 454-8909, CA.

● *SAN FRANCISCO GAFFER AVAILABLE:* Also dolly grip & best boy on commercials, industrials, docs, features. NABET 15. In partnership w/ IATSE 659 camerawoman Caris Palm at Sobrante Studios. Reel available. Steve Shriver, (415) 222-7377, CA.

● *CAMERA CREWS:* Film & tape, CP-16r & Nagra. Sony BVP 300 & BVU 110. Editing ENG & documentary crews available. Negotiable rates. Top credits. Ron Zimmerman, Visual Evidence, Inc., 411 Bonham-at-the-Alamo, San Antonio, TX, (512) 225-6708/299-1400.

● *PRODUCTION COMPANY:* Seven Greys/M.F.T. available to produce your projects, commer-

cial or independent. From budgets to shooting to showing, we'll respect your project, budget & schedule. In-house producer, director, cinematographer, production manager, production assistants & van for film & video. Contact Phyllis Adams, (212) 334-9199, NYC.

● *FILM PACKAGING, PRESENTATIONS & PRODUCING:* Reasonable prices, classy packages, short notice OK. Previous packages available for consideration. Shootfire Films, 272 Bowery, 3rd fl., NYC 10012, (212) 334-9199.

● *ACTRESS FOR VOICEOVER WORK, TRANSLATOR:* Spanish & French. Sample tape of work done for Ministry of Education of Nicaragua. R. Pikser, (212) 222-0865, NYC.

● *PRODUCTION ACCOUNTING:* Budget planning to bill paying. 15 yrs in major market broadcast, multi-media & print production/finance experience. Diana Dring, (415) 567-6064, CA.

● *PRODUCTIONS IN SPAIN:* Licensed production company w/ full crew available. Experienced in features, rock videos, documentaries, shorts & commercials. Absolutely low rates (our last video came in under budget of $10,000). Possibilities of co-production subsidies. Call or write Free Way Films, Calle Hortaleza, 74 Madrid 28004, Spain, Tel: 232-1136.

Opportunities ● Gigs

● *EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR* w/ successful exp. in management of large media arts or similar arts non-profit organization. Strong track record in development, fiscal & organizational planning, community relations & outreach. Interpersonal skills essential. Salary 25-30K. Boston Film/Video Foundation, Dept. A, 1126 Boylston St., Boston MA 02215.

● *POSITION AVAILABLE:* Visiting video artist for spring semester, 1986. Full-time teaching load in intermediate & advanced level video courses, incl. an experimental class. Proficiency on the following equipment required: Sony 6800, BVU 110, Sony 3M camera & 5000 & 2000 series VTRs w/ 440 controller. Deadline: Oct. 1, 1985. Send resume, sample of work on ¾" tape, 3 references w/ addresses & numbers & a cover letter specifying teaching experience & working philosophy to Barbara Sykes-Dietze, Video Coordinator, Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605.

● *INTERN INTERESTED IN DISTRIBUTION* of independent video needed at DCTV. Preferably college student interested in arts administration. No pay, but access to video equipment & workshops. Contact Ileana Maria Montalvo, Downtown Community TV Center, 87 Lafayette St., NYC 10013, (212) 966-4510.

● *EXPERIENCED FILM EDITOR* sought for work in 1986 on 1-hour Black independent documentary *A Question of Color.* Film explores intra-group values in the Black American community: skin color, hair texture & facial features through personal interviews, archival film footage & photographs. Sensitivity to Black/white U.S. race relations extremely important. Send resume & cover letter to: Kathe Sandler, 736 West End Ave., #1B, NYC 10025.

● *INDEPENDENT FILM PRODUCER SEARCHING:* Completed, contemporary, humanistic, *copyrighted,* original screenplay by credited feature scriptwriter. Submit synopsis only (it will not be returned), with professional dossier to Park Sq. Station, Box 15756, Stamford, CT 06901.

● *GAFFER WANTED:* Camera crew w/ ¾" gear looking for film gaffer interested in developing video lighting skills. Paid & spec. work. Send resume to: Imagelink Prods., 355 W. 85th St., #61, NYC 10024.

● *PRODUCER NEEDED* to put together financing for story of Mario Lanza or other singer-related stories. Voice & soundtracks available. Songs already recorded. Can obtain rights to book on Lanza's life for TV or movie. John Amato, 41 Calvert Ave., Commack, NY 11725, (516) 462-9547.

● *BTSC* seeks part-time film coordinator w/ distribution exp. Call Carl Clay at (718) 527-0836 for details, NYC.

● *FEATURE FILM CREW:* Independent production company in pre-production on feature film. Principal photography in Washington, DC., Spring 1986. Seeking 1st & 2nd asst. directors, editors, unit manager, camera & sound crews, wardrobe, grips, gaffers, special effects personnel & other crew positions. Must have solid prior experience & be willing to work non-union. Send resume or call: Chorvinsky Studios, 411 Howard Ave., Kensington, MD 20895, (301) 564-1433.

Publications

● *OCTOBER:* Hollis Frampton special issue available from MIT Press, Spring 1985, $6. MIT Press, Journals Dept., 28 Carleton St., Cambridge, MA 02142.

● *THE UNDERGROUND FILM BULLETIN,* the only publication devoted to the independent underground cinema of the 1980s. Previous issues incl. interviews &/or articles on Kenneth Anger, George Kuchar, Nick Zedd, Jack Smith, John Waters, Jim Jarmusch, Lydia Lunch, Manuel DeLanda & many more. Back issues available: #1 $7; #2, $5; #3, $5. Current issue #4; 75¢ from James Harding, Box 1589, NYC 10009, (212) 228-1896. Incl. $1 for postage.

● *SO YOU WANT TO MAKE A LIVING?* Audio cassette & transcript now available from NY Women in Film's spring Young Professionals Seminar. Staff positions in film & TV discussed by prominent women in the fields. Send check for $10 for 90 min. cassette ($9 WIF members), $6 for transcript ($5 WIF members), or $15 for both ($14 WIF members) to: NY Women in Film, 27 W. 20th St., #1203, NYC 10011, (212) 206-8555.

● *OREGON GUIDE TO MEDIA SERVICES:* Published by the Media Project, this is the latest directory of Oregon's film, video & related media businesses. Categories include cinematographers, distributors, editing services, producers, screening rooms, transportation, writers. Send $9 plus $1 postage & handling to: Media Project, 925 NW 19th, Portland, OR 97209, (503) 223-5335.

● *SCENE TECHNOLOGY* is a college-level text on current technical practices of constructing, painting, assembling, rigging & shifting scenery for the performing arts. Written by Northern Illinois University professor of theater arts Richard L. Arnold. The illustrated book deals w/ scenery in all media, incl. live theater, TV, dance, opera, etc. Prentice-Hall, Inc., College Division, Rte. 9, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632.

● *FOUNDATION GRANTS INDEX ANNUAL, 14th EDITION* identifies funding priorities of the nation's largest foundations. The largest index ever, it covers over 34,000 grants of $5,000 or more reported to The Foundation Center by 460 foundations. These grants, valued at over $1.6 billion, repre-

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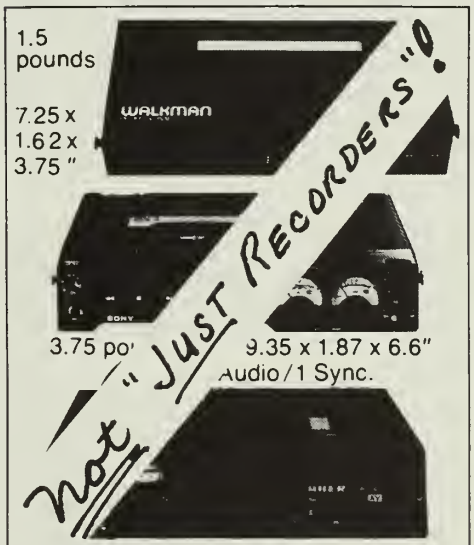
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sent almost 40% of total grant dollars awarded by private foundations in 1984. $44 paperbound. Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave. & 16th St., NYC 10003, (212) 620-4230.

● *JOURNAL OF ARTS MANAGEMENT AND LAW* spring issue, *Consumer Behavior and the Arts,* provides a working knowledge of consumer behavior essential to professionals responsible for marketing & selling the arts & culture. Single copies, $12.50; $11/each for 10+, $10/each for 20+. Contact Journal of Arts Management and Law, Heldref Publications, 4000 Albemarle St. NW, Washington, DC. 20016, (202) 362-6445.

● *PLI PUBLICATIONS AND AUDIO/VIDEO CASSETTES: Practical Guide to the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984—A Course Handbook,* $35; *The New Era in CATV: The Cable Franchise Policy & Communications Act of 1984,* $35. Practising Law Institute, Dept. BF, 810 7th Ave., NYC 10019, (212) 765-5700.

● *MEDIA ARTS RESOURCE DIRECTORY: Who to Call* published by the Mid-Atlantic States Arts Consortium, now compiling a survey of media arts resources in the mid-Atlantic region. Mid-Atlantic States Arts Consortium, 11 E. Chase St., Ste. 7-B, Baltimore, MD 21202, (301) 685-1400.

● *COMMUNICATING IN THE '80s:* Book & videotape from the Benton Foundation decribes how some nonprofits have successfully put new technologies to use for fundraising, publicity & media relations, consensus building, advocacy & public education. Book: $3/copy or $2/copy for 10+. Videotape: $40, ¾"; $30, VHS or Beta. Benton Foundation, 1776 K St. NW, Ste. 900, Washington, D.C. 20006.

● *BEST-SELLING HANDBOOKS FOR BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS:* Titles include *The Corporate Scriptwriting Book* ($14.95); *The Video Production Guide* ($28.95); *The Handbook of Private Television* ($74.95); *Organizational TV News* ($16.95); plus more. Communicom Publishing Company distributes these books & also offers scriptwriting workshops & script critique service. Communicom, 548 NE 43rd Ave., Portland, OR 97213, (503) 239-5141.

● *PRIM VIDEO COMPOSITION:* Journal of the Independent Film Alliance Du Cinema Independent (1FAci) spring issue, Vol. 1, No. 1, now available. Send $1.50 to: 1FAci, 4060 St. Laurent, Suite 303, Montreal, Quebec, H2W 1Y9, CANADA, (514) 843-5561.

● *PUBLICATIONS FROM CBS EDUCATIONAL & PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHING:* "How to Capitalize on the Video Revolution, A Handbook for Entrepreneurs Smart Enough to Profit from the Video Revolution," by Charlene Canape; "Analyzing Films: A Practical Guide," by William A. Phillips & "Home Video Production," by Pamela Levine, Jeffrey Glasser & Stephen Gach; "Fellini's Faces," edited by Christian Strich; "Pauline Kael's 5001 Nights at the Movies," "Made Into Movies: From Literature to Film," by Stuart Y. McDougal & more available from CBS Educational & Professional Publishing, 383 Madison Ave., NYC 10017, (212) 872-2000.

● *NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL: Journey Across Three Continents,* major catalogue of African and Black American cinema. Incl. listings, photos, articles & chronology of Black cinema. Also, *Anthology: Asian American Film & Video,* directory of Asian American media, w/ articles, programming, PR & technical information & more. Contact: Third World Newsreel, 160 Fifth Ave., Suite 911, NYC 10010, (212) 243-2310.

● *HOME VIDEO MARKETPLACE* industry directory provides info on program owners, distributors, duplicators, retailers & service providers in home video. $45/copy. Knowledge Industry Publications, 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604, (914) 328-9157 or toll-free, (800) 248-5474.

Resources ● Funds

● *FUNDING FOR VIDEO EXHIBITION: Through the Looking Glass,* a 2-hr. program of artists' video curated by Robin White for the NYS Museum in Albany, presents a range of video styles & approaches from 15 artists, incl. Richard Serrra, Dara Birnbaum, Dan Reeves, Peter Campus, Nam June Paik & William Wegman. 60% rental subsidy for program is available to New York State nonprofit organizations. Contact Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NYC 10019, (212) 560-2919.

● *NEA CHALLENGE GRANT* program has changed its application deadline from mid-January to Dec. 12, 1985. Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply will be November 15, 1985. Challenge Grant Program, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC. 20506, (202) 682-5436.

● *MORE NEA DEADLINES:* Film/Video Production, Nov. 15, 1985; Expansion Arts, Oct. 14, 1985 (Organizations); Dec. 2, 1985 (Services to the Field); Folk Arts Organizations & Apprenticeships (Individuals), Letter of Intent by Nov. 15, 1985, application deadline Jan. 9, 1986. NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW , Washington, DC. 20506, (202) 682-5436.

● *FILMS ON MEDIA STUDIES* from the Cinema Guild: *Six O'Clock and All's Well; For the First Time; Media: Massaging the Mind; The Adventures of Juan Quin Quin; Reporters;* and *Communications: The Wired World.* Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, NYC 10019, (212)-5522.

● *DOCTORS FOR ARTISTS:* A nonprofit doctor referral service to aid performing & visual artists. Offers artists 20% discount on medical services incl. office visits & surgery. Doctors for Artists, 123 W. 79th St., NYC 10024, (212) 496-5172. Referral operator: M-F, 10am-6pm.

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● *COMING OUT WEST?* NY indies planning to shoot in Northern California or the San Francisco Bay Area can save time & money by contacting AIVF member Karil Daniels to coordinate the most effective, least expensive shoot possible. Over 10 years experience working in/with the SF indie film & video community. Contacts to quality freelance crew members, locations, equipment, services & supplies, at best rates. Contact Karil Daniels, Point of View Prods., 2477 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94110, (415) 821-0435.

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● *WRITERS & PRODUCERS:* Seeking evaluations, sales, development deals, or top agency representation? Contact Flaming Rose Prods., 770 Princeton Ave., Metedeconk, NJ 08724, (201) 892-5552.

● *$15,000 WINDSOR TOTAL VIDEO SCHOLARSHIP:* Center for the Media Arts will award a new Media Arts Foundation scholarship in the fall. Scholarship will assist students who demonstrate financial need & who have exemplary talent, acumen & motivation to succeed in the media world. Windsor Total Video, 565 Fifth Ave., NYC 10017, (212) 725-8080.

● *1985 WHITNEY BIENNIAL FILM/VIDEO EXHIBITION* together w/ the American Federation of Arts, now offers film & video components of the 1985 Biennial, a survey of contemporary art consisting of films & videotapes produced during the previous 2 years. The 31 pieces are offered separately or together & include works from Lizzie Borden, Larry Gottheim, Ericka Beckman, Lynne Tillman, *et al.* The exhibition will continue to tour & will reach approximately 35 sites in the U.S., Canada & abroad. American Federation of Arts, 41 E. 65th St., NYC 10021, (212) 988-7700.

● *NEW CINEMA* features interviews w/ independent filmmakers present at the 11th Annual Montreal Int'l Festival of New Cinema & incl. discussions ranging from personal approaches to filmmaking to broader attempts to define the nature of film. Filmmakers incl. Charles Ahearn, Emile de Antonio, Les Blank, Doris Chase, Michael Oblowitz, Werner Schroeter, *et al.* Rental, $95; purchase $595. Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, NYC 10019, (212) 246-5522.

● *INTERNATIONAL INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS SOCIETY* now has a New York chapter. IICS, founded in 1982, provides a forum for the exchange of ideas & information promoting the use of interactive media. Organization activities incl. workshops, special events, programs, an on-line electronic bulletin board & newsletter. Membership: individuals, $50; students, $25; corporate, $500. IICS, c/o Video Management, Inc., 565 Fifth Ave., NYC 10017.

● *KROWN INC.* works w/ American corporations, production companies & movie studios to feature corporate brand identification in feature motion pictures & TV productions & create effective marketing tie-in promotions. Krown offers the independent producer the chance to reduce expenses by supplying products, locations, set dressings, etc., as well as arranging tie-in promotions between the product & the film. Contact Krown Inc., 8484 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 235, Beverly Hills, CA 90211, (213) 658-8771.

● *THIRD WORLD PRODUCERS PROJECT:* The Film News Now Foundation provides 1-on-1 consultations in all aspects of fundraising, development, production, postproduction, exhibition & distribution for Third World, social issue & women's media producers. Also offers limited fiscal sponsorships. Send proposals or call Renee Tajima or Christine Choy, Film News Now, 335 W. 38th St., NYC, (212) 243-2310.

Trims ● Glitches

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Media Alliance director Robin White & Sound Shop president Robert

McDowell, awarded an Alliance Partnership Award by the Alliance of New York State Art Councils honoring the groups' joint efforts in the creation and implementation of the successsful On-Line Program.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to filmmaker Leslie Thornton, 1985 winner of RISCA's $3000 Artists Fellowship.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Nietzchka Keene for receiving a Fulbright Fellowship to Iceland for a dramatic film proposal.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to the 1985 NAMAC Management Assistance awardees: Cine Accion, Community Film Workshop, The Film Fund, Frameline, Image Film/Video Center, Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Southwest Alternate Media Project, UCVideo, Utah Media Center, Video Free America, Visual Communications & Women Make Movies.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Monitor Award winners Dean Winkler & John Sanborn, Bob Mowen, Tim Farrel, Michael Pelech & Ed Henning.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to UCVideo in Minneapolis for winning a Minnesota State Arts Board Artists in Education grant.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to winners of the UC Video *Translations 85* open competition: Pier Marton, Wendy Ultan & Glenn Biegon for the videotape *Hold It;* John Flomer for *Trio Sonata for Two Mechanisms;* & Dorit Cypis, Victor Prokopov & James Harry for *Everything in Sight.*

● *KUDOS* to Lauri Kreindler-Laster, who received a Cine Golden Eagle for her 1984 documentary film *The Solar Advantage.*

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to recipients of CPB Open Solicitation funds: Peter Davis & Mabel Haddock; Alan & Susan Raymond; Janet Forman; Lisa Hsia.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to awardees of the Film Fund's 1985 Womens Projects grants: Jenny Rohrer & Nancy Meyer, $5000; Pat Ferrero, $2500; Barbara Kopple, $6000; Kathe Sandler, $5000; Lucy Winer, $2000 (loan); Pat Snyder, $2500; Marthe Sandlin, $3500.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to winners of the 1985 Film Fund 1st Cycle Grants: Stan Davis & Joan Jubela, *Bombs Aren't Cool;* Susana Blaustein & Lourdes Portillo, *Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo; X-Change TV;* Peter Davis & Mabel Haddock, *Nelson Mandela;* Cornelius Moore, *South Africa Organizing Project;* Jesus Trevino, *Yo Soy;* Susan Christian, *Black Women's Distribution Project;* Andrea Weiss, *International Sweethearts of Rhythm;* Lorraine Weese, *Lillian La Roo at T. Junction;* Rachel Lyons, *Men Who Molest;* Meri Weingarten, *Wake Up to Rape;* Deborah Shaffer, *Witness to War;* Barbara Margolis, *The Cold War;* Howard Dratch, *Drums Across the Sea;* & Elsa Rassbach, *The Killing Floor.*

● *KUDOS* to winners of the Paul Robeson Awards for 1985: Steven Fischler, Jane Praeger & Joel Sucher in the documentary category for *I Promise to Remember.*

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Will Parinello and John Antonelli, producers of *Kerouac.* The film received the American Film Festival Blue Ribbon in the Dramatic Literature Feature category, the Best of Northern California Award at the National Educational Film Festival in San Francisco & a certificate of merit at the Chicago Film Festival.

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FIVF WELCOMES . . .

Charlayne Haynes joined the FIVF/AIVF staff this summer as director of the Screenings and Seminars program. Originally from Boston, Haynes worked for public television station WGBH and WCVB-TV. Since arriving in New York four years ago, she has served as a media consultant, production coordinator, and publicist in association with independent producers and nonprofit organizations.

FIVF THANKS . . .

Amalie Rothchild, for her donation.

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MEMBER DISCOUNTS

AIVF is pleased to announce a discount program of film and video production services for its members. The companies listed below will offer discounts to AIVF members upan presentation of a membership card. We hope that this program will foster closer cooperation between independent producers and companies that provide production services.

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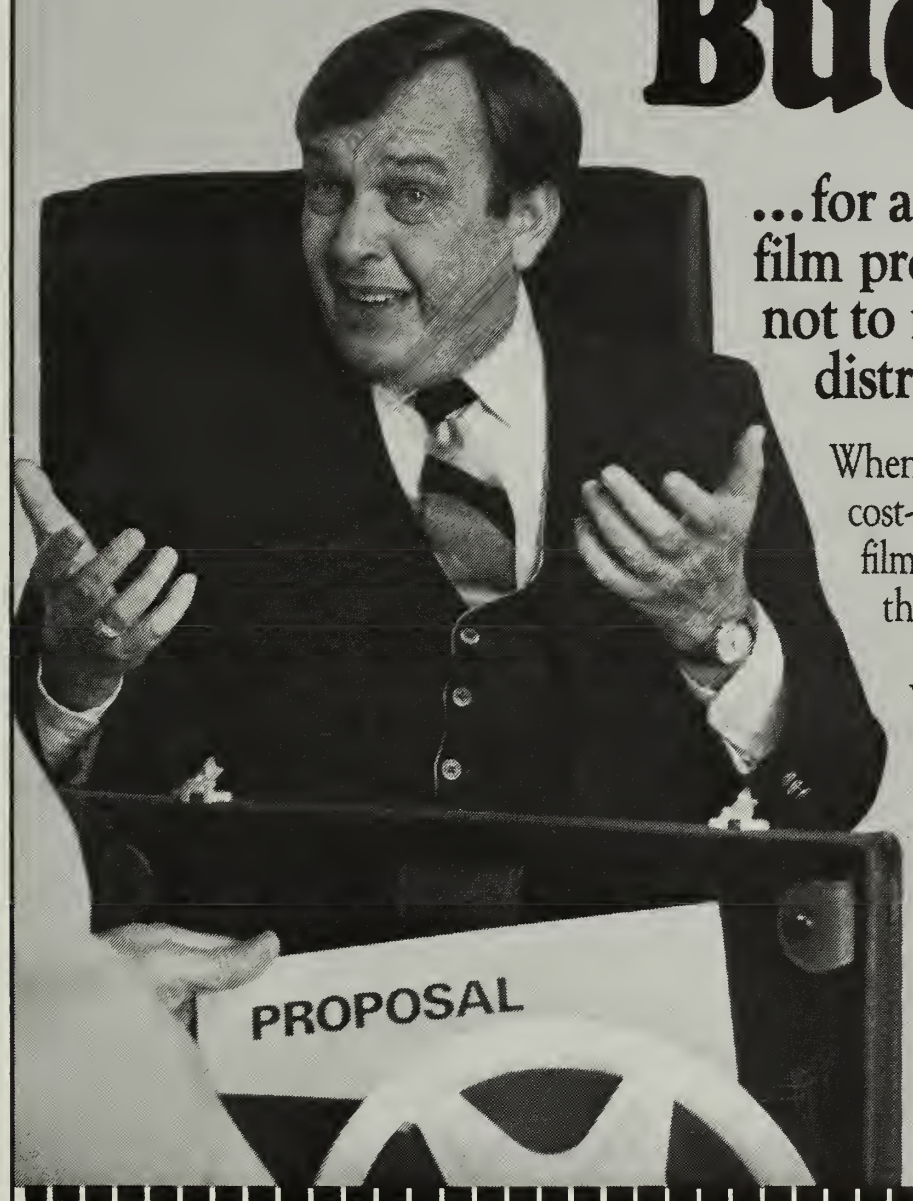
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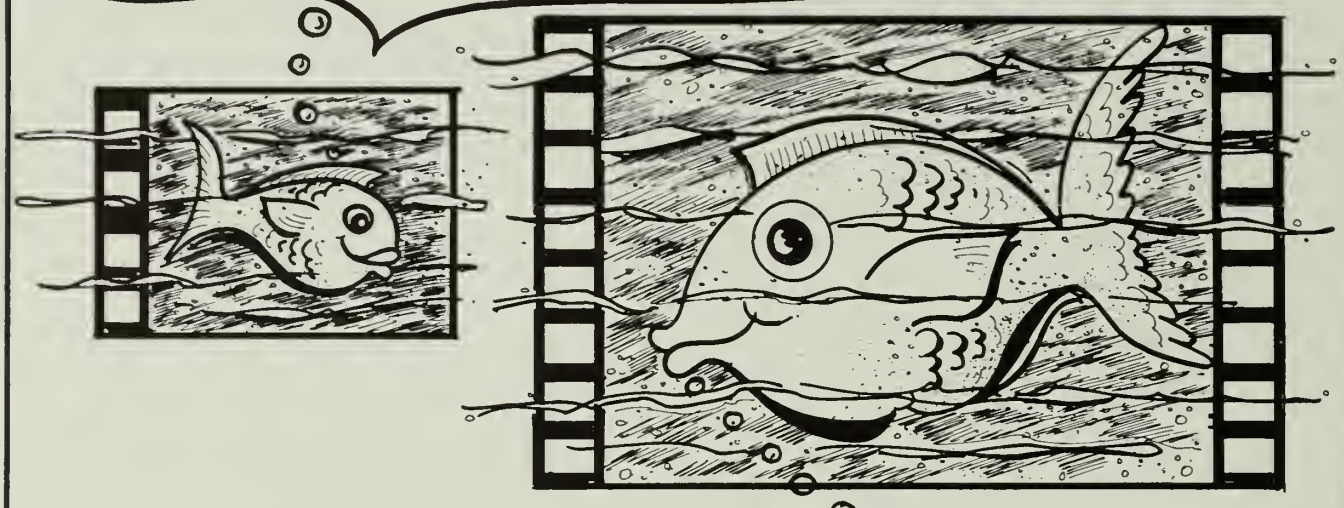
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NOVEMBER 1985
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 9

Publisher: Lawrence Sapadin
Editor: Martha Gever
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Advertising: Barbara Spence; Marionette, Inc. (718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBoer 113 E. Center St., Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeezo Typography
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Foundation far Independent Video and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a not-for-profit, tax-exempt educational foundation dedicated to the promotion of video and film, and by the Associatian af Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc. (AIVF), the national trade association of independent producers and individuals involved in independent video and film. Subscription is included with membership in AIVF. Together, FIVF and AIVF provide a broad range of educational and prafessional services for independents and the general public. Publication af **The Independent** is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

The Independent welcomes unsolicited manuscripts. Manuscripts cannot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included. No responsibility is assumed for loss ar damage.

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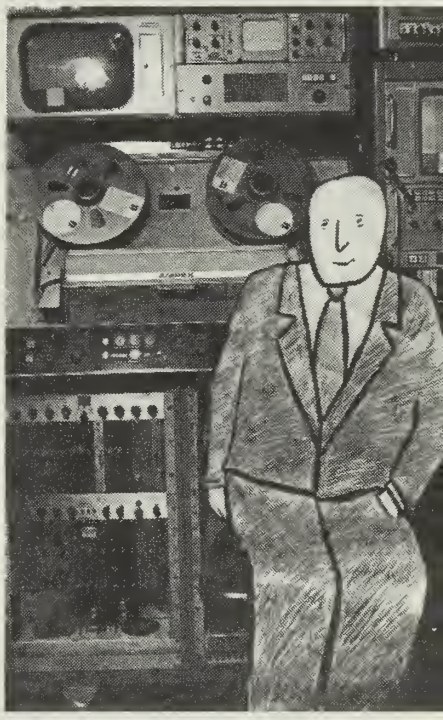
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COVER: KTCA-TV and the Walker Art Center are hoping that in a tass-up with MTV audiences will chaase "Alive from Off Center ," the PBS series that features warks like Christian Marclay's "Record Players." Barbara Osborn critiques the trial run of "Alive," which appeared on PBS statians last summer. Phato: Dave Friedman.

INSIDE MOVES AT THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE

On September 13, in the midst of the flurry of activities surrounding the National Video Festival, the American Film Institute announced that *American Film* magazine would be published in a new joint venture with the AMS Foundation for the Arts, Sciences and Humanities. The announcement capped a number of major organizational changes that have occurred at the Institute during the past year.

Late in August, director Jean Firstenberg announced the appointment of a new bicoastal management team that will "strengthen links between the two main offices in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C." James Hindman, formerly associate director of TV and Video Services, has been named the first associate director of national programs. AFI has gradually moved its operations west since the purchase of the Immaculate Heart College campus in Hollywood. The only remaining Washington-based operations are the financial offices, the 224-seat AFI National Theater at John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and one preservation staffer who works out of the Library of Congress. *American Film,* once housed at the JFK Center, will now share offices with AMS Foundation's *MD Medical News* magazine in New York City.

Los Angeles is headquarters for all other AFI activities, including the film school, the Sony Video Center, all national programs, and the development office. Even the theater at the JFK Center is mainly programmed from Los Angeles by Filmex artistic director Ken Wlaschin and executive director Susan McCormick, receiving space at AFI in exchange for the directors' exhibition consultancies. Hindman and Rod Merl, the new assistant director of campus and program administration will be based on the West Coast, along with Ken Scherer, who has assumed the post of director of development, close to the potential donors in Hollywood. The other half of the new management team, associate director of finance Bruce Neiner and Richard Teller, the assistant director of programs, will work out of the Washington headquarters.

The new management configuration comes on the heels of a major reprieve from the multimillion dollar debt AFI assumed with the purchase of Immaculate Heart. This year, AFI became the first art institute in California to qualify for the California Educational Facilities Authority Pooled Bond Program. Using the $6.7-million raised from the bonds, AFI has refinanced the campus debt at low interest. One of Scherer's major tasks will be a capital campaign to pay off the Institute's obligation to bond holders within the 15-year limit.



"American Film" will have a new home and may have a new look as an AFI-AMS Foundation joint venture.

The new joint venture with the AMS Foundation should be another fiscal shot in the arm for the Institute, as AMS is expected to provide an unspecified amount of underwriting to *American Film.* Under the new arrangement, James A. Clements, the president of *MD Medical News,* will serve as the executive publisher to whom current *American Film* publisher Margaret Byrne Heimbold and editor Peter Biskind will report. Clements told *The Independent* that he plans no editorial changes, but will try to improve the magazine's design and coordination, saying, "We think *American Film* will benefit from being in a professional publishing environment." As for shoring up finances, the new publishing team plans to reduce the number of editorial pages, increase ad pages, and raise the membership/subscription level from its current 135,000 to 200,000, according to Heimbold.

—Renee Tajima

BROKEN PROMISES

Public access advocates are accustomed to hostility from cable operators, who so often regard their access obligations with blatant cynicism. The usual modus operandi has been to promise substantial financial and operating support to access operations during franchise negotiations and then renege on them after the contract is signed, leaving the unenviable and sometimes impossible task of contract enforcement to municipalities. So it is no surprise that Miami Cable is eager to free itself from its obligations to pay Miami Cable Access Corporation, the city's independent nonprofit access facilitator, $2-million in start-up and equipment funds and $1-million in annual operating funds. What is unusual is that the city of Miami, rather than defending access, is leading the attack to destroy MCAC. "The city is spurring the movement to change the access ordinance," said Gary Smyth, MCAC executive director. "In my years of involvement with access I have never seen a city turn on public access in this manner."

On July 25, by its own initiative, the Miami City Commission amended the city cable television ordinance to eliminate Section 402, which requires the establishment of an independent corporation, and Section 403, which spells out the operator's financial obligations to MCAC. Even before the city commission vote, MCAC had not seen a single penny of the funds required by the ordinance after over a year in operation. Instead, it had been running on a single initial contribution of $200,000 from the cable company. According to Smyth, the city cable office repeatedly assured the MCAC board and staff that their position was secure despite Miami Cable's intransigence. "They told us not to worry," recalled Smyth. "They said, 'Everything's fine, you have a contract.'" After such assurances, "The reaction of the board [to the commission's vote] was shock."

As an alternative to MCAC, Miami plans to transfer access responsibility to Dade County. The city said it would give one percent of the operator's gross revenue to the county govern-

ment, which, through the Dade County Public School System already possesses a working television facility. The Anna Brenner Meyers Telecommunications Center, where educational programming is currently produced, makes MCAC's proposed neighborhood studios redundant. However, representatives of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers found that the Meyers facility "is not now operated in such a way that well-equipped studios are made available for public access by individuals."

J. Terrence Kelly, chair of MCAC's board and a vice president of Miami-Dade Community College, confirmed that county officials told him in recent meetings that the county is not, in fact, interested in providing access to private citizens on a first come, first serve basis. Instead, the county intends to provide what they call "community access," defined as a mechanism for nonprofit organizations to use the media. Apparently, this policy is key to the city's desire to shift access responsibilities to the county. Miami mayor Maurice Ferre has made repeated public statements against individual access in the city, expressing fears that access channels will be dominated by pornographers and suspect political elements.

Should MCAC shut down, Mayor Ferre will not have to lose sleep over Commies and portapak pornographers invading the homes of Miami's citizenry. At the same time, Miami Cable will be relieved of its financial obligations to the nonprofit facilitator, a commitment executive director Smyth estimates could add up to $14- or $15-million. When asked if there was any evidence that the city and Miami Cable are cooperating in the attack on MCAC, Smyth declined comment. But MCAC's legal counsel Tom Julin remarked, "I suspect the cable company has at some point communicated its desires to the city."

One of the murkiest issues in the MCAC controversy involves a three percent payment that Miami Cable is required to pay the city according to Section 405 of the cable ordinance. This percentage is over and above the five percent franchise fee, and the company's financial obligations to MCAC. The additional percentage required a special FCC waiver, and when the city testified to the FCC last year regarding the fee, officials explicitly stated that these monies would go toward access activities. They also pointed to the provision in the city's contract with MCAC guaranteeing that Miami would give them one-fifth of this fee or $200,000, whichever is greater, during MCAC's first five years of operation. The FCC granted the waiver on these conditions. Said Julin, "No one at this time knows whether the city has been receiving these contributions from the company or how much they have received. It's one of those things that is going to need clearing up." However, it is known that MCAC has never received its percentage of the money, and that the city has never made clear what will become of Section 405 should MCAC fold.

The city commission did require one condition for approval of amendments to the cable ordinance. Miami wants a letter of indemnification from Miami Cable and Dade County to protect the city from litigation should MCAC decide to sue to enforce the terms of its contract. As of September 19, the letters had not been received, and Miami's next move remains unclear. "The city might undo what it has done regarding the amendments," conjectured Julin. "Everyone is playing a guessing game." Most probably, unless MCAC is prepared to pursue its legal options, citizens of Miami will be denied public access. *—Debra Goldman*

HOUSE VOTES NEA MEDIA INCREASE

This month the U.S. Senate will begin to look at a House budget package that includes an additional $3-million to the National Endowment for the Arts Media Program. According to Neil Sigman, a staff assistant to Representative Sidney Yates (D-Illinois), chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior and Related Agencies, the increase was influenced by hearing testimony regarding the current financial difficulties of the public broadcasting sector. The extra $3-million would be quite a boost to the Media Program's current $10.2-million budget, but at present no one will say specifically how the money will be used. One spokesperson from NEA's public information office—who, curiously, asked to remain unnamed—speculated that the funds would go mainly toward arts programming. But Julia Jackson Moore, who coordinates that division for the Media Program, indicated that it is premature to make any decisons regarding the money since the appropriation has not yet gone before the Senate. And Washington observers point out that the deficit conscious, Republican controlled Senate is less likely to be generous with arts appropriations than the predominantly Democratic House.

Independent producers would, undoubtedly, welcome any increase in dollars to independent production. In 1985, NEA awarded $785,000 to independent producers for film/video production; another $315,000 went to regional fellowships, and the American Film Institute's Independent Film and Video Makers Program distributed another $245,000. By contrast, the New York State Council on the Arts alone will dispense an estimated $761,220 to audio, radio, video, and film, and the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities has already given out $481,796 to media. The ever-increasing contributions from these two states are a huge boost to the field as a whole, as well as models of public support to independents. Hopefully, Congress will follow the states' example with a boost in federal dollars. *—RT*

A CAPITAL IDEA

Most media centers find it almost impossible to raise money for their most important assets—hardware. So when the Media Program of the National Endowment for the Arts found a $100,000 surplus in its 1984 budget, special capital grants of $25,000 each were given to three regional centers: the Center for New Television in Chicago, Film Art Foundation in San Francisco, and Film in the Cities in St. Paul. The centers had been singled out by the Media Program panel to receive any excess funds. That same panel deemed facilities support as the greatest priority facing media arts centers.

FITC now provides access facilities for film and audio production, but will apply the grant toward purchase of ¾" video editing equipment. The system would include computerized editing, allowing producers to use the same floppy disc to edit on 1", and it may be housed at UC Video, located down the road from FITC in Minneapolis. The Center for New Television is now deciding between the purchase of expanded or upgraded equipment. They are looking at back-up decks for the existing editing system, a three-tube color camera, and interactive video and computer graphics systems. FAF plans to buy a six-plate Steenbeck for long-term rentals, as well as sound transfer equipment. As the only film access center in the Bay Area, 1,000 members keep FAF's existing four-plate and six-plate editing tables in constant use.

The remaining $25,000 was divided between New York City's 185 Nassau Street Corporation and Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, known as LACE. These extra dollars will go toward management support for commercial facilities access programs. Earlier this year, however, 185 Nassau's Stand-By program became the object of a dispute between its two creators, 185 director Alex Roshuk and engineer Richard Feist. Feist now administers a "Stand-By" access program at the Raindance Foundation, while Roshuk maintains that 185 owns the right to the trademark. *—RT*

WOMEN'S MEDIA: AN ENDANGERED SPECIES?

On September 1, the Bay Area's Iris Distribution closed after a decade of handling women's films and videotapes. "We've been struggling for about two years," explains codirector Liz Stevens, "but we finally had to shut down after unsuccessful efforts to raise money to publish a

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catalogue." Iris's proposals were rejected by funders like the California Arts Council and even the San Francisco-based Women's Foundation. Iris's business was primarily in rentals, which entails high overhead costs for shipping, billing, storage, and the like. Eventually they could not generate enough income to replenish the collection with new works or pay publicity costs. "It really shows that subsidies are critical to survival, and without them we can't continue as noncommercial distributors," says Debby Zimmerman of Women Make Movies, the organization picking up most of Iris's titles. As Stevens points out, WMM's location in New York City enables them to receive support from consistent funders like the New York State Council on the Arts. Iris, producer of *In the Best Interests of the Children* and *We All Have Our Reasons,* will continue to produce films despite the demise of its distribution operations.

In contrast, women's independent media is getting a boost in Chicago, where Women in the Director's Chair has become a membership organization. Since 1980, Women in the Director's Chair has sponsored an annual film and video festival, with video screenings at the Center for New Television and films shown across the street at Chicago Filmmakers. Last April, the group decided to admit members and expand its services. So far, they have organized workshops with Berkeley videomaker Elizabeth Sher, New York City filmmaker Christine Choy, and local writer-videomaker Julia Lesage, and have started work on a membership directory and skills survey.

Memberships in Women in the Director's Chair are $15, and $10 for students. For information, contact Box 4044, Chicago, IL 60654.

—RT

NEGATIVE ACTION IN BROADCAST LICENSING

As deregulation of the airwaves gains momentum, a federal appeals court struck down yet another affirmative action directive from the Carter era. In a two to one decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the FCC had exceeded it statutory authority by granting women preferences in competing for FM broadcasting licenses. The plaintiff in the case, *James U. Steele v. FCC,* unsuccessfully competed against Dale Bell for a license to operate an FM station on St. Simon's Island in Georgia. Steel sued the FCC in order to overturn its decision to award the license to Bell, charging reverse discrimination. At issue in the complaint is a formula by which women and minorities were given extra points in the evaluation of license applications, a policy developed by the FCC in 1978 to fulfill its mandate to serve the public interest and increase diversity in the communications media. According to an article in the August 24, 1985, *New York Times,* the court stated, "Women transcend ethnic, religious, and cultural barriers.... Therefore it is not reasonable to expect that a woman would manifest a distinctly 'female' editorial viewpoint." The court said its decision would not apply to preferences granted to ethnic or racial minorities. A strongly worded dissenting opinion was filed by Judge Patricia Wald, who stated that commission had been well within its public interest mandate by granting preferences to women.

—RT

GERI ASHUR FUND ESTABLISHED AT NYFA

Last July, a special fund at the New York Foundation for the Arts was established as a tribute to Geri Ashur, the noted independent documentary film producer, editor, and screenwriter who died last year. Ashur's husband, Richard Brick, and a group of her friends and colleagues have deposited over $5,000 in the Geri Ashur Screenwriting Fund and plan to raise at least $50,000 to secure a sufficient endowment for an annual $5,000 award to a New York screenwriter. The grant will be administered by NYFA as part of its Artist Fellowship Program. The first award will be made in 1986 or 1987.

The group that initiated the fund is currently seeking contributions. Donations are tax-deductible and should be sent to the New York Foundation for the Arts, 5 Beekman St., Suite 600, New York, NY 10038. Contributors should indicate that their gifts are for the Geri Ashur Screenwriting Fund.

CHANGING TIMES

Emily Eiten, a long-time friend of independents at WNET in New York, left her post as coordinator of program acquisition and coproductions last September. Faith Kiermaier will replace Eiten as the coordinating producer of *Independent Focus*....Marc Weiss will leave Media Network after six years as executive director. Weiss, who plans to remain active with the organization, will be replaced by Bobbie Hoff, an independent fundraising consultant. Hoff has been a film editor and organizer with the United Farm Workers and Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union....The National Alliance of Media Arts Centers selected two co-chairs at its September board meeting: Stephen Gong, assistant director of the National Center for Film and Video Preservation, and Mary Lea Bandy, director of the film department at the Museum of Modern Art.

—RT

It Worked for Fred & Ginger...



Have you ever wondered how they got those microphones close enough to Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers to record their tapping feet without showing the microphones in the picture? Well, if you have, then read on....

Placing microphones to record bouncing basketballs, shuffling feet and dancing effects presents a considerable cost on location, and even when you can fit the microphones in the shot, there's bound to be some background noise that prevents you from getting a "clean" recording. Editing each effect, one tap at a time, might seem like a good alternative, but that's only if your editor works for free. So how do they do it in Hollywood? The answer is: on a Foley stage.

Foley, named after its progenitor, Jack Foley, who did off-camera sound effects in the 1930's, is the delicate art of recording effects such as a person walking, pages turning, chewing or crunching potato chips in perfect sync with picture. Hollywood filmmakers have been using this technology for years and, more recently, independents have come to know the dramatic results available through use of the Foley stage.

The Sound Shop is home to one of New York's few Foley stages designed to meet the needs of independent filmmakers. Foleys are done in a controlled environment, providing much higher quality results than you can get on location. The architecture of the Sound Shop's Foley stage includes a series of "pits" built into the floor. Within these pits are a number of floor surfaces including gravel, dirt, sand, snow, hard wood, hollow wood, concrete, grass, carpet and tile. These surfaces, in conjunction with any imaginable prop, provide the tools with which to create Foley sound effects.

The key elements in Foley recording, however, are human: Foley "walkers" are professional actors trained to mimic on-screen action in order to reproduce live sounds. Foley mixers record and synchronize effects with the action in the picture, one segment at a time for complete control.

Foley effects are often "bigger" than reality, which is an asset when you need to play comedy or where the "real" effect just isn't what you hoped for. For a demonstration of the Sound Shop's Foley stage, please call Jeff Cohen at 573-6777.

Sound Shop

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MULTI-CHANNELS: CHICAGO VIDEO GROUPS

Jim Brooks

Fade in: long shot revealing a wall of almost 100 television sets, attached to form a large rectangle. Another angle: a souped up, white Cadillac (resembling the Batmobile) races down the asphalt strip, toward the TV wall. Another angle: the Caddy speeds toward the TVs at full speed. Another angle (slow-motion): the Caddy plunges into the wall, sending the sets flying; the tall exhaust column is ripped from the car as it emerges from the shattered TV wall.

This scene, familiar to independent videomakers nationwide, was produced in 1976, by an artists' group called Ant Farm, at their *Media Burn* event staged on July 4 at San Francisco's Cow Palace. In 1985, *Media Burn*'s climactic crash can be seen every week in Chicago, shown behind the closing credits of *Image Union,* a local showcase of independent videotapes on WTTW, the Public Broadcasting affiliate. This is appropriate because Ant Farm, though defunct, was comprised of independent videomakers, and former Ant Farmer Tom Weinberg remains a major proponent of independent video in Chicago today. Weinberg produces *Image Union* and occasional special programs at WTTW. In addition to his work at the station he owns a production company and currently has a few projects in development. But his participation in independent video dates back 13 years. "A group of us from around the country got together in 1972 and began producing tapes," Weinberg recalls. "Somebody had the idea of calling our group Top Value, like the trading stamps, so we became TVTV." Among the best-known productions by TVTV are *Four More Years, Superbowl, Master of the Universe,* and the *It's a Living* series featuring people who work at mundane jobs.

Other groups of videomakers active in Chicago in the seventies were Communication for Change and Videopolis. A basic philosophy motivated these producers during this era: producing socially significant tapes at low cost and having them broadcast as widely—and as often—as possible. Crew members, writers, and directors often overlapped and worked on each other's projects. Everybody helped where they could, doing the tasks they knew best. Despite some grants and funds from other sources, the process was slow and often frustrating. Even in those primitive days of independent video, post-production costs were extremely high. Also, broadcasting outlets were rare. These two conditions led to the formation of Chicago's two most respected and valuable resources operating today: *Image Union* and the Center for New Television.

"In 1977 a group of independent videomakers organized to raise money for editing facilities," explains Joyce Bolinger, executive director of CNTV. "This group, led by Scott Jacobs, Ted Theodore, and Weinberg, incorporated the Chicago Editing Center, which was renamed CNTV in 1980 [the year Bolinger was hired]." Originally, CNTV operated with a single editing system donated by Paul Roscor, who owns a thriving video equipment business. Today, CNTV features two editing suites, a screening room, portapak rental, special effects and titles generators, and various logging/dubbing systems. CNTV boasts 350 members, a figure that keeps Bolinger beaming—and still strives to reach more independent Chicago videomakers. "Of our members, only about 50 people use the center regularly," Bolinger reveals. "But the center is really the hub of the Chicago video community. Editors now working in every post-production house in town were trained at CNTV. People from all over the Midwest come here for our seminars and classes, or just to visit and use the facilities."

Although CNTV is not the only postproduction facility in Chicago open to independents, it is the best known and offers a variety of classes, seminars, and screenings, in addition to editing access. CNTV also serves as a clearinghouse for information bringing together members of Chicago's video community. Bolinger describes "the unique mentality of cooperation" CNTV fosters: "The important element of Chicago video is that individuals here have always shared information, and still do. Dan Sandin [a professor at the University of Illinois, Circle Campus in Chicago] created his Image Processor and gave the plans away to anybody who was interested. In New York and on the West Coast people are much more guarded, for good reason: information is gold. But people in Chicago have always shared."

Independent video producers east and west of Chicago may take exception to Bolinger's observations, but she is not alone in this assessment. Weinberg notes that many producers in Chicago are still working together, and where possible, trading information and skills. "I'm still bringing a seventies awareness to my work," he says. "I don't get involved with exploitative material, and I try to work with my crew as a team of individuals, rather than as an electronic caste system."

Although the general consensus in Chicago among videomakers and others involved in the media scene is that independent video is thriving, some dissent exists. Anda Korsts, an active producer in the seventies, is not pleased with the current climate of Chicago's video network. Korsts was involved in TVTV, Videopolis, and Videofreex productions. She teaches and lectures about many aspects of video production, and has been active in organizing a community access funding council. "Original video doesn't exist anymore," Korsts asserts. "It's just a repeat of things that were done before—and done much better than today. Now there is a lot of political infighting and vindictiveness in Chicago video. Except for videographics, nothing new is being done at all."

Still, cooperation seems common in Chicago's video community, while specialization is one feature it shares with the rest of the country. Most observers here acknowledge that the entire video industry has matured since the heyday of independent producers in the seventies. Ted Theodore, a fundraising consultant at Charles R. Feldstein and Company and a co-founder of CNTV with Jacobs and Weinberg, comments, "People no longer consider themselves merely videomakers who do all aspects of production. Rather, today you have people who are writers, or technicians, or camerapeople, who regard themselves as part of an industry that is much less flexible than it was, even five years ago."

Theodore agrees that Chicago's video community is generous, but he suggests that more *individuals* are producing tapes now, compared with many groups that created programs 10 years ago. "It's still an active community, but only larger productions that can develop a significant financial base can survive and succeed." Theodore also notes that CNTV is widely used by local videographers, but it is not the only postproduction house in town. Three Yellow Pages of video production service listings support Theodore's claim.

Two other significant components in the Chicago video picture are the Video Data Bank and the video department of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The Data Bank's collection numbers some 2,000 tapes. Individuals are welcome to view tapes in a screening room during Data Bank hours, and tapes are rented and sold to educational and cultural groups. "Our archives contain videos produced locally and elsewhere in the country," says Data Bank staffer Ken Kirby. "I'd say about 20 percent were produced by Chicago videomakers."

The Art Institute School has provided a singular influence on video art produced in Chicago, thanks to Sandin's Image Processor. "Our department is one of the main institutions

using the Image Processor as an instructional device," observes Bernard Hasken, chair of the Art Institute School's video department. "We've been training video artists for years, and today there seems to be a trend toward narrative work using the Image Processor. Hasken adds that many Art Institute graduates remain in Chicago to continue working—and experimenting—with video. "Chicago is often seen as isolated from either coast" Hasken says, "but I don't know of a better video community. There is no place I'd rather be working."

Jim Brooks is an independent videomaker and freelance writer based in Chicago.

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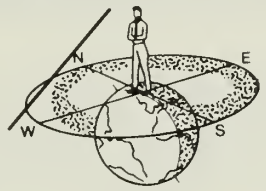
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LAB NOTES: SUPER-8 PROCESSING AND PRINTING

Toni Treadway

For all the independence that shooting Super-8 gives us, we are still dependent on Kodak, Fuji, and Agfa for a continued supply of filmstocks, and on the lab services that attend to our needs. To maintain quality and service from labs, Super-8 filmmakers have to advocate for their medium and patronize places that respond. Based on Bob Brodsky's and my experience, we recommend you cultivate a relationship with dealers and laboratories. Work with a lab; don't just complain and switch. Use Super-8 appropriately and frequently. The more film you shoot, the more labs will pay attention to you. They are also more likely to schedule processing daily, run control strips, and guard against scratching film. Finally, make yourself known to other Super-8 filmmakers, so you can identify and share information about reliable sources of supplies and services.

We expect Kodak will continue to provide film and processing for years to come, as they still do with regular 8mm, 20 years after its "demise." Kodak gives the most consistent quality in processing. Patience is required, because the company waits for a certain amount of film before running its large machines. Depending on when when they do a run, processing can take two to 10 days. Rochester has been slower than Palo Alto lately, but both labs take extraordinary care with processing [see "Gods of Silver," *The Independent,* July/August 1985].

Quickie labs give one to three day service on Kodachrome or Ektachrome, but there is a risk. To achieve that speed, they run round-the-clock operations, using poorly trained, minimally paid personnel on the machines. The results are quick but bad: color shift, scratching, warping, and dirt. A lab must pay a lot of attention to detail to deliver good processing consistently: proper handling of film to avoid scratches, sufficient replenishment of chemicals, and running control strips. To create beautiful color and to avoid warping in drying, time and temperature must be monitored.

Good processing of Ektachrome 7244 and the black and white filmstocks (7242 film is no longer available, although it was a favorite of many filmmakers in its day) requires finding a convenient lab that performs well. Fuji's Single-8 films have been improved by superior processing and service, centralized in Anaheim, California, and available from Fuji in prepaid mailers. Prestriped film in silent cassettes is available from Hal and Mary Cosgrove (see Halmar on list below).

Scratches happen in all filmmaking. Before you accuse a lab of ruining your images, be sure you know where the problem lies. When your film comes back from a lab with wavy scratches (vertical but moving back and forth), the scratches are processor-induced. Periodic horizontal digs can also be caused by grit on a roller in the processor. Straight line scratches (black = base, colored = emulsion), however, are your problem. They happen in the camera or at the first screening in your projector or viewer and can be avoided. The only unavoidable scratch is fortunately the rarest: a tiny spur of plastic in a film cartridge that accounts for approximately one percent of all scratches we have seen. More often it's caused by filmmaker error.

If the scratches are yours, a few tips can help eliminate them [see "How to Beat the Screening Meemies," *The Independent,* September 1983]. A child's toothbrush flicked across the camera's gate between loads of film will whisk away accumulated "crud" that can harm film. Treat your projector to a cleaning after every five or six hours of viewing, at a minimum, by applying Lemon Pledge furniture polish with a Q-Tip. Spray it on the Q-Tip and swab the entire film path, from feed reel to take-up reel, with special attention to the film gate. Be generous with the Q-Tips; the first cleaning may require 30 to 40. Pledge not only gets rid of the grit in the film path, it lays down a gentle silicon "wax" that lubricates your machine. Usually, small bits of film, soundstriping, or a piece of splicing tape are responsible for knifing your newly processed film as it goes by.

If you have established that the scratches originate at the lab, you should urge the customer service people to approach their technicians. We have asked labs to break down a processor to find out what is scratching film. A small piece of film from a torn sprocket hole adrift in a processor can wreak havoc. We once discovered an egalitarian lab that scratched everyone's Super-8 films equally by breaking open the cartridges with a hammer. It took years before filmmakers' outrage resulted in improvement. Some labs use rivets to splice film together, creating impressions on the next round of film on the large take-up reel. If a lab does not respond within a reasonable amount of time to polite, firm requests, go elsewhere.

•

The accompanying list represents the labs that replied to our survey letter and constitutes neither an endorsement nor a comprehensive listing. If you have had recent experiences—good, bad, indifferent, or unusual—with the labs listed or others, please let us know. Advocacy and networks will keep Super-8 going until the year 2000.

Adams and Associates
1645 Bank St., Suite 202
Ottawa, Ontario KIV 7Z1, Canada
(613) 731-6416
Vic Adams and his team are excellent suppliers to Super-8 filmmakers. They supply equipment, filmstocks, laminated soundstriping, audio and video transfers, along with a lot of good information.

Alpha Cine Laboratories, Inc.
1001 Lenora St.
Seattle, WA 98121
(800) 426-7016; in Washington (206) 682-8230
Contact Jim Toon in customer service. Alpha Cine sells and processes 7244 and black and white. This lab has a courier service to the Bay Area (where it is making extensive and often praised outreach to independents), Hollywood, and Salt Lake City. Alpha Cine gives a half-price discount on processing to enrolled students, verifiable on their computer lists culled from local film and video departments.

Cineservice Lab
52 Kondazian St.
Watertown, MA 02172
(617) 926-0210
Contact Brad Chandler. Printing from all color and black and white Super-8 stocks to 7399. Optical reductions, 16mm to Super-8.

Filmlife, Inc.
141 Moonachie Rd.
Moonachie, NJ 07074
(201) 440-8500
Contact Sheila. "Rejuvenate, protect, and preserve" are the key words at Filmlife. Marvin Bernard has developed wonderful methods to help people with damaged or scratched films. Whatever the problem, it seems Filmlife can fix it, as well as perform odd jobs like single frame blow-ups.

Film Service Lab, Inc.
58–62 Berkeley St.
Boston, MA 02116
(617) 542-1238


FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
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Contact Jeannette, Tony, or George. They process 7242, 7244, and black and white, and provide contact printing service.

Froelich Fotovideo
6 Depot Way
Larchmont, NY 10538
(914) 834-5411
Included here because Froelich is the exclusive dealer for Goko telecines for video transfer. As such, they have set up many small businesses across the country that offer transfers of home movies to home video. Write for the list.

Halmar Enterprises
Box 793
Niagara Falls, Ontario L2E 6V6, Canada
(416) 356-6865
Contact Harold or Mary Cosgrove. This is the place to go for Fuji Single-8 supplies, including R25 and R200 sound, and prestriped silent film. In Canada only, they transfer 8mm, Super-8, and 16mm to home video or ¾". They also carry cameras, projectors, and quite a range of "gizmos" for Super-8, Single-8, and home video.

Huemark Films and Video
227 E. 44th St.
New York, NY 10017
(212) 986-5066
Contact Ralph Teitelbaum. Printing services, video transfers, and repair and loading of cartridges for Super-8 rear screen projectors.

Interformat
100 Brannan St., 5th floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 626-1100
Contact Michael Hinton. His specialty is blow-ups of Super-8 and 8mm to 16mm and 35mm.

Kinolux
17 W. 45th St.
New York, NY 10036
(212) 869-5595
Contact Seymour B. Richmond. They process 7244, 7242, black and white and do contact printing.

Magnestripe
333 Aycrigg Ave.
Passaic, NJ 07055
(201) 773-4633
Contact Jean Rose. Non-grooving sound striping for your original film (not prints or Estar) with an excellent quality stripe.

Newsfilm Lab, Inc.
516 N. Larchmont Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90004
(213) 462-6814
Contact J.L. Levy. They process 7244, 7242, ECO, black and white, Fujichrome, and E160 (with special set up). Printing services include a newly modified printer for A and B roll work, with density and color correction. They also transfer to video.

Optimage
70 17th Ave.
Roxboro, Quebec H8Y 3A4, Canada
(514) 683-5033
Contact Carrick Saunders. High definition optical masters from 8mm, Super-8, 9.5mm, and 16mm to Super-8, 16mm, and 35mm.

Restoration House Film Group, Inc.
Box 298
Belleville, Ontario K8N 5A4, Canada
(613) 966-4076
Contact Arnold Schieman. He was the senior technical consultant of the National Film Board of Canada until his retirement a few years ago. He can treat shrunken or brittle film and dried-out sound on videotapes and answer all kinds of technical questions about film.

Stadium Motion Picture Lab
12246 Frankstown Rd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15235
(412) 371-1211
Contact Michael Banos. 7244, ES 8 processing. He stocks and sells all Super-8 emulsions as well as 8mm and Single-8.

Super Cine
2214 W. Olive Ave.
Burbank, CA 91506
(818) 843-8260
Contact Larry Michalski. Contact printing on prestriped stock for sound films, and A and B roll printing with dissolves. Video transfers from 8mm, Super-8, and 16mm to ½" or ¾". Videotape duplication.

Super8 Sound
95 Harvey St.
Cambridge, MA 02140
(617) 876-5876 or 5877
Contact Philip Vigeant. They sell all filmstocks, and Super-8 equipment including Nizo cameras. They also publish *The Independent Producer,* an equipment catalogue and guide to Super-8 festivals and advertisers.

Super8 West
115 South Park
San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 957-1497
Contact Keith McCurdy. Information and products of the Super8 Sound line (see above).

Windsor Total Video
565 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10017
(212) 725-8080
Contact Bert Goodman, film/video services. Video transfers of 8mm and Super-8 film to any video format. Transfers of video to Super 8mm cartridge or reels.

Toni Treadway is the author, with Bob Brodsky, of Super 8 in the Video Age available in English and Spanish.

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INFORMATION WITHHELD

Joan Jubela

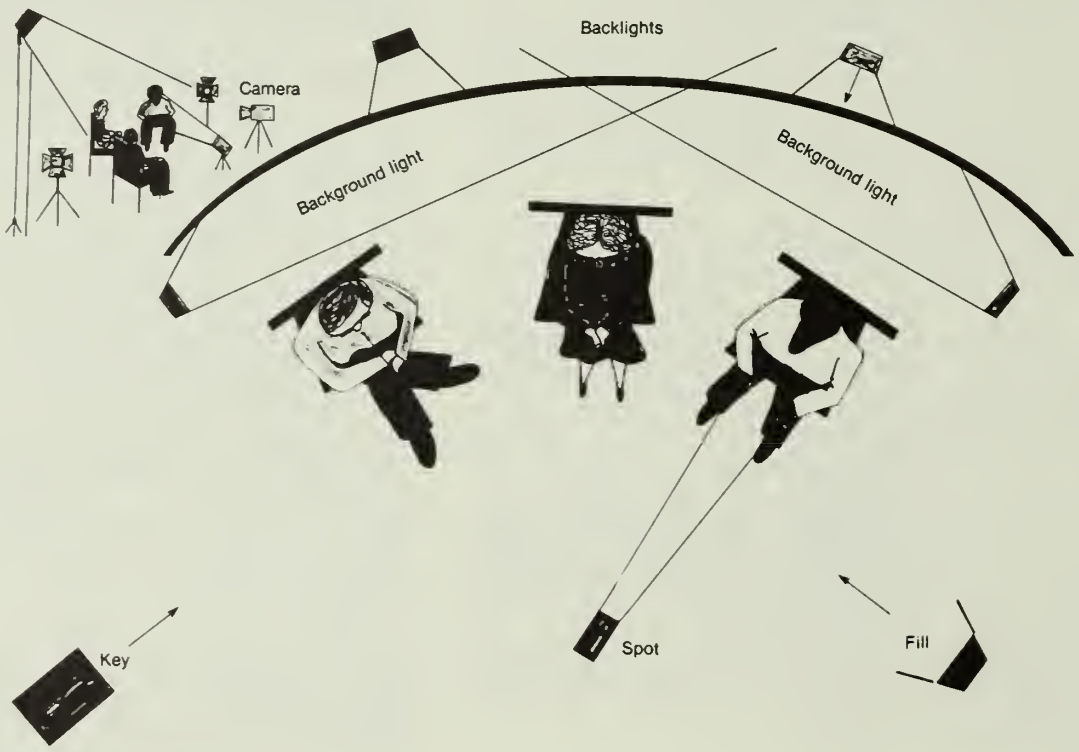
Professional Video Production
by Ingrid Wiegand
White Plains, New York: Knowledge Industries Publications, 1985, 211 pp., $39.95 (cloth), $24.95 (paper)

I was introduced to video technology in college via a work-study job as an audiovisual specialist, wheeling decks and monitors into classrooms, assisting instructors using educational media. When video images of the pained subjects in Stanley Milgram's experiments on authority and obedience turned into video snow, I was called in to clean the VTR's clogged heads. If everything ran smoothly, I sat in the back of the classroom reading video manuals like pulp novels, satisfying my lust to understand the signficance of terms like horizontal blanking and vertical intervals. That was the the mid-seventies, when technological innovation intersected notions of social process and a string of books like the Videofreex's *Spaghetti City Video Manual, The Video Primer,* by Richard Robinson, and *Independent Video,* by Ken Marsh, not only explained the complexities of physics and electronic magnetics in a relatively simple manner, but also undertook a politics of information. These proponents of independent media attempted to encourage self-expression, personal aesthetics, and the production of community programs that offered alternatives to the dominant cultural hype congesting the airwaves. Although these books could also be found on the shelves of industrial producers, they reflected the phenomena of independent media and increased widespread access to affordable production tools.

Since that time, the introduction of cheaper three-tube cameras, computer editing, digital effects, and new formats like Betacam has created a need for updated information. But the marketing strategy for Knowledge Industries Publications's *Professional Video Production,* by Ingrid Wiegand, reverses the emphasis of earlier volumes, even as it fills the technological gap. Although the book purports to address independent videomakers as well as professionals and students, it primarily targets the in-house corporate media director who has suddenly been shifted from the public relations department into video services because she or he took a film production course in college. Knowing which set of buttons to push is essential to anyone who wants to be able to edit, whether the tape is an industrial, documentary, or experimental video narrative. The same holds true for any standardized technical practice, whether registering a three-tube camera or writing a multi-camera script for live television. And on these subjects, Wiegand's book provides an excellent reference—up-to-date, comprehensive, and relatively simple to decipher, especially for the novice. But it gives no hint of the historical incursion of radical ideas into the field of video production.

Wiegand, producer of PBS documentaries and industrials alike, augmented her broad experience with thorough research. Her book offers solid, understandable sections on post-production and the fine-cut edit, as well as a technical appendix that includes an elaborate but easily comprehensible description of the elements of the video signal. She shares her expertise by anticipating the numerous problems and often costly mistakes that a beginner or even a seasoned professional might encounter. For example, the reader is reminded to take special care adding time code to an open audio channel while sound is simultaneously laid down on the other audio channel. In all likelihood, the time code will bleed through, rendering the soundtrack worthless.

Once would-be producers have absorbed the basics and begin to consider content and aesthetics, however, they would be well advised to bury this book under a stack of used videotape. *Professional Video Production* recommends that producers follow a basic rule of thumb summed up by the acronym KISS, or "Keep It Simple, Stupid." Perhaps this advice to the budget-conscious is tongue-in-cheek, but it also reflects a corporate mindset that follows established production rules as if they were handed down by a board of directors. For instance, instructions on "Choosing the Narrator" advise:



The "how to" of studio lighting is one of the many subjects covered, but not critiqued, in Wiegand's "Professional Video Production."

> The narrator should be invisible—not only visually, as he or she in fact is, but also to the consciousness of the viewer. For this reason, the narrator's delivery, while expressive, should be on the cool side. When it is said that television is a cool medium, it means that it works best when the emotional intensity of a speaker is restrained. Without going into the theory behind this, we can say that in general, a "laid back" narration seems to work best.

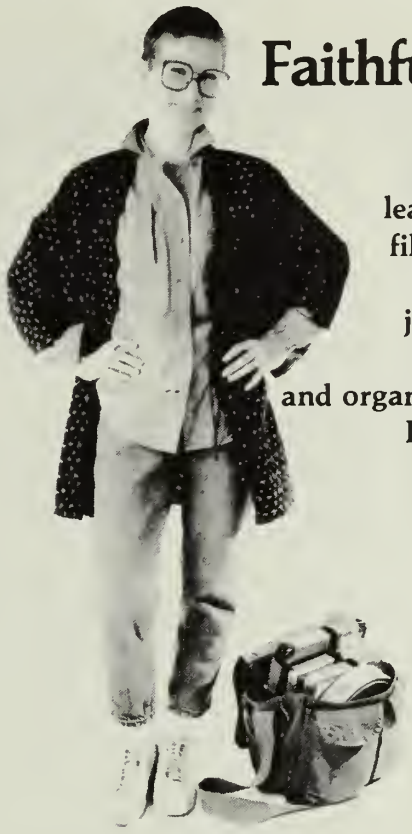
The author admits that there are no fixed rules for choosing narrators, but the message is clear: unless the goal is comedy, it's better to follow the prescribed formula than to break new ground.

Even the industrial producer, who might find it expedient to toe the line and follow each and every rule, will find omissions that restrict the book's utility. Chapter Two, "The Studio and Its Major Components," is directed specifically at the manager who needs to create his or her own studio. The technical information here is concise and accurate, but the chapter never translates this material into the practical how-tos of evaluating design limitations, anticipating obsolescence, or mixing compatible systems—hard facts that would be helpful to the potential buyer.

That *Professional Video Production* makes no mention of any product or piece of equipment by its brand name, however, is no oversight. Publisher Knowledge Industries not only caters to producers, but also to major hardware manufacturers. In addition to publishing, they sponsor production seminars and stage the annual Video Expo, a showcase for the most recent video products released in the market. It seems that rather than risk offending any one particular manufacturer, no manufacturers are mentioned; Wiegand even avoids the terms Betacam and Recam, discretely substituting the oblique heading "Component Videotape Recorders" for their product labels. Nor do creative purchasing ideas directed to the independent—like the collective buying and time-sharing of cameras or off-line editing systems—merit mention.

What might a production manual aimed exclusively at independents address? Wiegand suggests a direction when she devotes two paragraphs to potential markets for independent productions. A serious manual for independents today should include major sections on raising money from both the profit and nonprofit sector, as well as discussing strategies for distribution. Although *Professional Video Production* contains current technical information, it is a far cry from the older, more radical manuals that not only taught us how to manipulate the technology, but also how to keep the technology from manipulating us.

Joan Jubela is an independent producer and writer living in New York.



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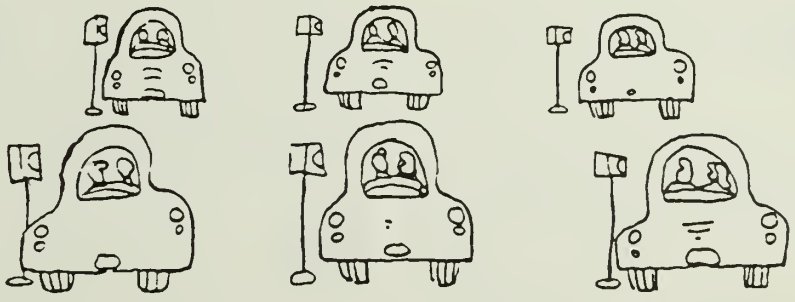
Orson Welles said you can learn everything technical about filmmaking in three days. What he didn't say is you can carry just about everything technical in one Danish Souperbag™—and organize your life at the same time. It deserves an Oscar for design and durability. What a bag!
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F IS FOR FUNDING

David Riker

There has never been a time when film financing was simple, and today's marketplace is no different. Film financing can be a confusing, convoluted realm, dealing in money, paper, legalities, and obscurities. Just like filmmaking, film financing is an art with a language of its own. Short of taking a business degree at some institute of higher learning, a filmmaker must learn to be alert to the complex machinations of the financial world. Any time large sums of money are involved, one can expect a complicated series of agreements to be set in place, and it is to everyone's benefit if film/video producers know the vocabulary.

To make more sense of the language of finance, we offer the following glossary, composed of some of the current buzzwords and perennial fuzzwords used in business circles. These particular words were often mentioned at the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers' May seminar *Getting the Money: Film Financing* and at several workshops with industry leaders during the *Production East* conference in New York City last June.

The glossary does not represent a complete list, since new terms are always being coined, new schemes hatched, and new angles conceived. It explains terms more often used in the private, rather than the public, sector. Private funding sources include anything from friends and relatives to corporations or complete strangers—in other words, investors. Public funding, on the other hand, is generally considered to be government sources, grants, and foundation support. Wherever one goes in search of production funds, however, it is wise to seek experienced legal advice as the best hedge against the many traps, travails, and pitfalls of independent production.

A

It seems appropriate to begin with *angel,* since this is a definite asset. An angel is someone who not only helps, but perhaps even works a few miracles. Whether he or she is a lawyer, banker, agent, producer, or big name actor, this person exercises certain charms or powers to help a production take wing. Advice, criticism, direction, and arm-twisting are among the services an angel can provide. Another, more narrowly defined, description of angel is someone who literally puts up *and* shuts up, supplying funds for a production but remaining silent about how that money is used.

Ancillary rights are a hot topic right now, as the burgeoning home video market is making many otherwise unfeasible productions possible. Ancillary rights include all rights to a feature film other than domestic theatrical release. Included, then, are foreign distribution rights (theatrical, television, and video), domestic television and/or cable distribution, world-wide theatrical play, and home video. The continuing boom in home video has turned some video distributors into partners in the creation of products for the voracious cassette market. Some distributors are financing projects upfront, some are giving advance payments to filmmakers in exchange for videocassette rights or profit participation in video distribution after theatrical play, and some are even doing negative pickups [see "negative pickup"].

B

Blue Sky Laws are state statutes that regulate and supervise securities offerings or sales to protect citizen-investors from investing in fraudulent companies. These laws regulate the conditions and requirements that determine the way an offering is made in a particular state. The laws vary from state to state but are generally designed to stop the sale of stock by fly-by-night concerns offering Florida swampland, elusive oil wells, and other such schemes. By requiring filing of the proper forms, a state ascertains the nature of an offering and the people making it. *Black's Law Dictionary* offers this definition: "A statute [is] called a 'Blue Sky Law' because it pertains to speculative schemes which have no more basis than so many square feet of blue sky." Keep in mind that, in addition to state statutes, one must also comply with federal rules and regulations regarding the sale of securities.

C

Capital, according to *Webster's Dictionary,* is "accumulated goods devoted to the production of other goods." *Capitalization* is the amount of money needed to produce a film. Financing a film can be likened to financing a building or a business—you need capital to get started. Filmmaking, however, deals with more ephemeral constructs than concrete, steel, and glass; it deals with art, information, or (how ephemeral can you get?) entertainment. And finding a tenant to rent space in a new building is a different proposition than finding enough theaters to rent your new film so that you earn a profit.

A *contract* requires an attorney. Contracts make life easier by strictly defining the nature and terms of an agreement between a producer and another party.

A *completion bond* is almost a necessity nowadays. This bond is a guarantee that a project will be completed. Completion guarantors stand between a producer and his or her financiers to ensure everything goes as planned and that the finished product is delivered on time and on budget. Occasionally, they will step in when a production gets out of control. Like an insurance policy, this bond impresses banks or large investors because it assures them that once underway, production will result in a completed film. The standard charge for completion bond service is six percent of the project budget.

Credit, in this case, does not refer to your name on the screen, but to the amount of money you are able to borrow. Paying back on time helps your career by keeping you friendly with your banker and/or investors [see "interim financing"].

D

A *discount,* as in discount on a loan, is a standard practice in which a bank will look at a production package and loan a lesser, discounted amount. Generally, banks do not loan total production funds to even the biggest name producers. The standard discount rate is now about 25 to 30 percent of the total budget proposal, i.e., a bank might loan $700,000 to $750,000 to a producer with a $1,000,000 budget.

Deferral is a method to reduce the amount of capital needed upfront by delaying compensation for crew and cast until the film begins to earn

money. Once the project is completed and money is coming in, it is shared, according to terms previously agreed upon, by all who worked to complete the film. Deferral terms are negotiable, but must be agreeable to all the parties involved: producers, unions, and investors.



Equity financing is the family friend route to production, in which money is raised in the form of non-recourse grants or direct loans, without the intercession of a bank. This method has some advantages for an investor, who will pay no tax on the loan recoupment, but only on the profits realized once the loan is repaid. This is distinct from an investor earning dividends from a corporation or limited partnership, which are taxable. The producer is responsible for repaying this type of loan in the same way one pays off a car or a mortgage on a house.



A *guarantor* is a risk-taker. The term applies to any party who participates in financing a production, undertaking certain obligations in return. Despite the label, there is no guarantee tors risk their money, expecting to see some return. Despite the name, there is no guarantee that is how things will work out.



Interim financing is the bank loan route to production. A producer convinces a reputable distributor or exhibitor to guarantee return of production costs (either through negative pickup or a profit-sharing plan), and presents this guarantee as collateral to the bank. The bank decides on how much to advance toward a production based on its evaluation of the parties and project involved.

Involuntary overcall is a seldom-used clause that can be included in a limited partnership agreement. It allows a filmmaker, as general partner, to demand additional money from investors, if needed. This amount is above the agreed-upon sum the limited partners have already invested. Generally, investors don't care for this clause, and its inclusion in a limited partnership agreement could cause "buy resistance" at the outset. It could even create a situation in which a producer (general partner) must sue an investor (limited partner) for the extra monies beyond the original investment. One alternative is a *voluntary overcall* clause, which allows additional contributions by investors in return for greater profit participation.



Liability, again according to *Webster's,* is "accountability and responsibility to another, enforceable by legal civil or criminal sanctions." A producer who uses other people's money and is thus liable to them should remember this phrase and act responsibly toward his or her investors. It is also important to conscientiously obtain proper legal advice in order to clarify those obligations.

A *limited partnership* is a legal structure commonly used in production financing. It is a partnership formed by two or more people to raise capital for the production of a film, regulated by certain provisions. Its members are one or more general partners and one or more limited partners. The general partner (producer[s]) in most cases assumes full responsibility for the manner in which the money raised by the partnership is spent—that is, the production and exploitation of a film. The limited partners do not participate in, nor are they bound by, the obligations of the partnership; their participation is "limited" to providing the partnership with funds and sharing in whatever profits may be realized. All the risks of production are borne by the general partner.

This limited partnership structure is derived from the various state partnership laws and federal tax laws. Commonly, the general partner receives 50 percent of the profits (on no contribution) and the limited partners receive 50 percent. Note, however, that profits are determined after expenses such as deferred salaries, prints, and advertising have been paid. A variation on this arrangement, legal in New York State and some others, allows the general partner to be a corporation rather than an individual. Corporate liability and individual responsibility differ and the distinction can be important when large sums of money are involved.



In a *negative pickup* deal, a distributor for a particular territory or territories, or one which owns ancillary rights, agrees to pay a producer a stated sum of money upon delivery of a completed film. Usually that sum is an advance against a percentage of the gross or net receipts of the film, payable when the actual negative is delivered into the distributor's hands. The producer uses this contract as collateral for a bank loan to pay production expenses, then repays the bank from the distributor's payments once the film is completed. The distributor then receives a completed film, without assuming any of the risks of production. The producer remains responsible for the production and its potential calamities. Normally, in this arrangement, the distributor has detailed input into the final shape of the film; actors, script elements, director, etc., are all decided in his presale agreement. Any deviation from the contracted terms during production can jeopardize the agreement, so a producer must be conscientious.



A *prospectus* is required when seeking public financing in the form of an interstate or intrastate offering to investors. The prospectus serves as the basic sales document, containing all relevant facts regarding the offering. Creating a prospectus is normally an expensive process, with substantial legal and printing costs, and an attorney is essential. The content of the prospectus and the manner in which it may be used is controlled by the Securities and Exchange Act of 1933, regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission, and by the type of filings required in the state in which it is submitted. For the serious reader, the Securities Act and other relevant forms can be obtained from the SEC. Prospective prospectus writers should ask for Regulation D, Form D, and the amended Securities Act of 1933 from the Office of Chief Counsel, Division of Corporation Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, 500 N. Capitol St., Washington, D.C. 20549.

Now, the hard part. You can learn all these terms, but getting a film produced is more involved than mastering the lingo. In the world of independent filmmaking, the only rule is that you "do what you can that day" to get your film made. If that means going ahead with production without a completion bond, so be it. If it means negotiating some new type of co-production arrangement with a video distributor, so be it. For the independent, this glossary is strictly a generic listing, open to interpretation and innovation. Along with making new films, the challenge for independent producers is to be alert to new ways in which films can be financed and put on the screen.

The author thanks producer Peter Newman and attorney Marsha Brooks for their expert advice. Brooks.

David Riker aspires to be a struggling filmmaker in New York City.

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NEW WAVE ON THE AIR WAVES







(From top to bottom) Joseph Chaikin, Laurie Anderson, and Karole Armitage are among "the stars of performance art" featured on "Alive from Off Center."
Photos: Thomas Victor, Michael O'Brien, Henry Grossman

Barbara Osborn

Television, our everyday companion, is nothing if not predictable. The medium needs and breeds familiar faces and predictable formats. Even the news offers well-rehearsed, recycled plots and points of view. When *Alive from Off Center,* PBS's new wave performance/video art series debuted last summer, it proved to be the first nationally broadcast video showcase to accept these facts of television life. The eight half-hour programs, jointly produced by the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis and the Twin Cities Public Broadcasting station KTCA-TV, present what the promotional literature calls "the stars of performance art." Two of *Alive from Off Center*'s featured artists—David Byrne and Laurie Anderson—provided certified draws, having already navigated the gulf between fine art and mass culture. Others, like Spalding Gray and Ann Magnuson, seem bound for the same glory. The formats in which these representatives of "the new generation of avant garde artists" (to quote from the press releases again) are placed are even more recognizable. The video/dance collaborations or video versions of theater performances call to mind those stalwarts of the Public Broadcasting System's schedule *Dance in America, Great Performances,* and *Alive*'s not-so-ironic namesake, *Live from Lincoln Center.* Another *Alive* format—compilations of video clips—alternately evoke MTV and self-referential television parodies pioneered by *Saturday Night Live,* now hobbling into its eleventh season. Proclaimed in the series' PR as "the first ongoing opportunity for television audiences to experience the innovative video being created by the adventurous artists," *Alive* also provides enough that is familiar to attract the less venturesome viewer.

Early feedback from critics, Nielsen, and the public TV system confirms that the strategy of *Alive*'s executive producer Melinda Ward and producer Tom Adair, was on target. Funded to the tune of $500,000 by a panoply of foundations including the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Telephone and Telegraph Foundation, the Northwest Area Foundation, and public agencies like the National Endowment for the Arts and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the *Alive* budget allowed for extensive promotion (less than one-eighth of the total was spent on program acquisition). The KTCA staff helped put out the word on the series, a New York City public relations firm was hired to host several regional kick-off parties, there were saturation mailings of an elaborate press package, and an on-air promo was produced. The result is that public stations in the top 30 markets took the show, offered free to PBS affiliates during July and August, the dog days of the broadcast year. The eight programs earned Nielsen ratings between two and four points—

meaning that on a good night, *Alive* reached an audience in excess of 3,400,000 homes. Those numbers are easily dwarfed by the average network sitcom, but they satisfied producer Ward's ambition to win "national visibility."

Although *Alive from Off Center*'s publicity suggests this effort to put video art on television is pioneering, it's not. In the late sixties, artists and media utopians determined to change the face of television found a sympathetic patron in the Rockefeller Foundation. Rockefeller agreed to fund Artist-in-Television grants at public TV stations in Boston and San Francisco, programs that blossomed into WGBH's New Television Workshop and the Experimental Television Workshop, later the National Center for Experiments in Television, at KQED. Over the next few years, selected artists—Stan VanDerBeek, Douglas Davis, Nam June Paik—were given the opportunity to play with television simultaneity and electronics, ultimately creating a phone-in show in which callers' voices were instantaneously translated into on-screen visuals, a two-channel broadcast, and image/music collages. In 1969, WGBH producer Fred Barzyk commissioned six artists to create short tapes for *The Medium Is the Medium,* broadcast by a number of PBS stations. Structured like an arts documentary, that program, like Barzyk's subsequent anthology shows *Video Variations* and *Video: The New Wave,* represented the first attempt to package the techno-anarchism of the late sixties in a conventional television program.

The Rockefeller Foundation expanded its investment in the future of television in 1972, funding the newly created Television Laboratory at New York's WNET. Although a few years younger than the Boston and San Francisco workshops, the TV Lab quickly moved into prominence, thanks to generous support from the New York State Council on the Arts. Like the other workshops, the TV Lab was created to mediate art and television. The Lab's facilities—an engineering freak's delight—were briefly open on a first come, first serve basis; later, access was restricted to NYSCA-supported artists-in-residence. Described in a WNET 1978 press kit, the Lab was

> ...committed to the belief that, in an environment removed from the pressure of day-to-day programming and broadcast necessities, it is the artist who is likely to reveal some of the broader, more unique potentials of television. In a creative atmosphere, the artist's vision of today may well become the television of tomorrow.

In 1974–75, perhaps the Lab's most productive year, dozens of hours of programming originating there were aired: the anthology *Video Visionaries,* documentary specials produced at the Lab by Downtown Community Television and Top Value Television, a series of broadcast signoffs created by Paik, and the premiere



From "Alive"'s promo packet: "America's hottest performing and video artists posed for an historic photo session in New York."
Photo: Henry Grossman



Sankai Juku, the Japanese Butoh group, performed in the series opener last July.
Photo: Devillier-Donegan Enterprises

season of the Lab's first independent video showcase, *Video and Television Review.*

Unfortunately, during its early years the TV Lab was often less than generous in its dealings with producers. In large part due to its ties to independent artists, the Lab was a magnet for grant dollars, taking in hundreds of thousands a year. But while artists-in-residence were required to spend all of their NYSCA-funded stipends at the station, the Lab's contract with videomakers ensured that WNET's obligations were minimal. The station never promised to air works produced at the Lab. If a piece was picked up for broadcast, WNET was not required to pay the producer a cent. And before *VTR* was confined to what became the "independent ghetto," late Sunday evening, the series floated within the schedule. Premieres were usually assigned to 11 p.m. slots, but post-midnight airtimes were not uncommon. Irregular broadcast hours and WNET's minimal promotion kept *VTR* a late night diversion for devoted viewers.

A decade separates the premieres of the TV Lab's *VTR* series and *Alive from Off Center.* Chronologically, at least, *Alive* is the "television of tomorrow" the seventies workshops hoped to influence. Other than some artist overlap—Skip Blumberg, John Sanborn, William Wegman, for example—that influence is questionable. The laboratory experiments, in fact, have been abandoned. The San Francisco center closed in 1976, and the TV Lab expired in the early eighties. Only the New Television Workshop precariously survived by switching its priorities in the late seventies from video art to the more traditional concept of art on television, becoming a major producer of dance and drama programs. The fate of the workshops reflected larger shifts in the character of public TV. Abandoning its early populist and experimental rhetoric, PBS established itself as a fixture in broadcasting by promoting middle-class notions of "quality" and "seriousness," represented by the presence of aristocratic British accents, evenings at the symphony, progressive science shows, and most recently, paeans to free enterprise.

Why, at a time when fiscal restraints are pushing PTV toward ever greater caution and commercialism, should video art have renewed appeal? In the *Alive* press packet, a background essay by freelancer Don Shewey proposes that at the dawn of the video movement "television... was viewed with suspicion by artists," who cared only to view video "from a cool, formal distance." In contrast, today's avant-garde has the "artistic maturity" to engage "in their ongoing critique of mass culture on its own territory. Call it '80's practicality if you like... [contemporary artists] use provocative ideas to communicate with and influence a mass audience, especially the young people who watch television most."

Call Shewey's version of video history eighties amnesia if you like—the impetus behind sixties video was as much political as formal—but he fingers the quality that makes video art on television viable. In part, Melinda Ward credits CPB's interest in the series to "a desire to attract the television generation," the 20- to 40-year old audience on every programmer's target list. Who might better lure these viewers to PBS than artists who, in Shewey's words, "have absorbed the energy of mass culture from day one.... Watching MTV create new pop stars has given many artists ideas about rescuing themselves from a marginal financial existence." Apparently it's also given PBS programmers ideas about attracting the MTV crowd.

Perhaps the best measure of the distance between the days of the experimental workshops and *Alive* is Ward's statement to the *New York Times* that "the criterion [for program selection] was that the work had to be good broadcast television." Good broadcast television was one of the concepts that many videomakers in the sixties and seventies opposed. Their experiments, more process than product, were aimed at obliterating mainstream parameters of television, not stretching them.

•

Conceived as a performing arts series, *Alive from Off Center* developed from a number of performance works coproduced for television by the Walker Arts Center. Ward, then director of Walker's media program, was a likely candidate to oversee a national PBS series, although none of Walker's previously produced tapes were included in *Alive.* Ward's choices were based on her own preferences and intuitions, the advice of KCTA staff, and the availability of tapes conforming to broadcast standards.

What distinguishes *Alive*'s performance works from those found in other PBS series? Often, very little. The exceptions, like Charles Atlas's contributions to the compilation *Summer Dances,* produced at the New Television Workshop, and Atlas and Karol Armitage's dance video *Parafango,* create memorable images by eliminating the proscenium arch and projecting an aura of punky youthfulness. Through adroit camerawork and editing, these works fulfill *Alive*'s promises, transforming dance into television. On the other hand, *Tongues,* Shirley Clarke's video rendition of Joseph Chaikin performing a Sam Shepard monologue, is reminiscent of regular PBS fare, special effects notwithstanding. Shepard's work has been featured on PBS before, and, not surprisingly, this offering from the avant-garde playwright elicited the warmest response from critics and viewers.

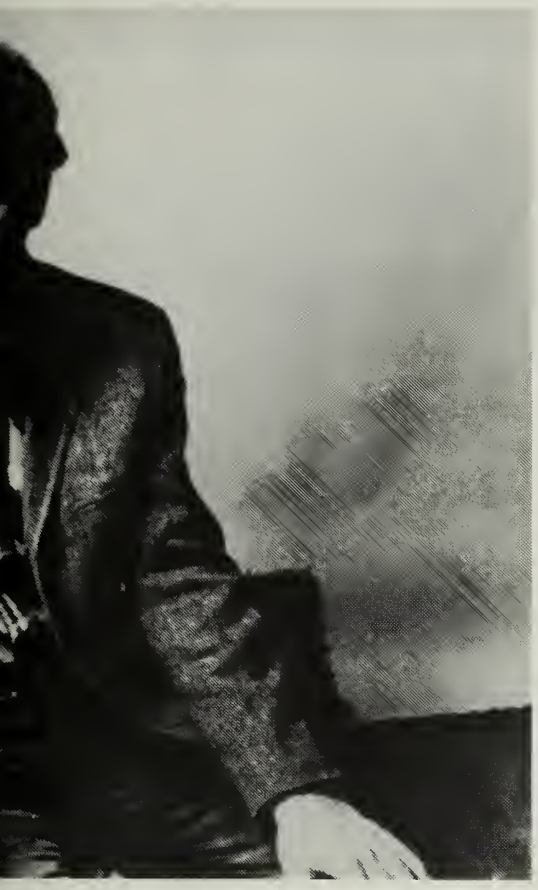
Only one program in the series, Skip Blumberg's unedited 25-minute tape of Spalding Gray talking his *A Personal History of the American Theater,* was made specially for *Alive.* Initially, Ward planned three original productions, but financial constraints intervened. Perhaps the



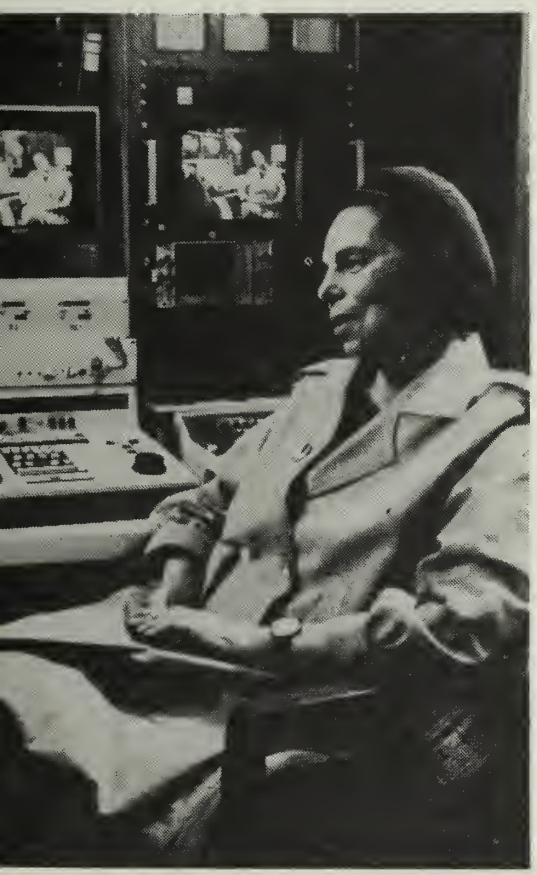
Spalding Gray on camera talks about the strange
Photo: Nancy Campbell



Host Susan Stamberg (left) interviews "Tongues" dire
Photo: Tom Ador



has met on "the highways and byways of my life."



hirley Clarke (right) from the control room at "Alive."

$20,000 budget for the surviving project dictated its format as a relatively inexpensive studio shoot. In an attempt to complement Gray's simple stage delivery with technical minimalism, the stationary camera zooms in and out at predictable intervals. Even though Gray's monologue is engaging, the program contradicts much of *Alive*'s hype about the innovations in store for viewers when stage artist and video artist meet. Spalding Gray on television simply makes one appreciate Spalding Gray live.

If the dance and drama tapes evoke *Alive*'s high art public television precedents, the shows devoted to video shorts are clearly indebted to cable TV. Shewey names Home Box Office, the Weather Channel, *SCTV* (Second City Television), and, inevitably, MTV, as the programming that changed TV viewing habits and thus made the "ground-breaking" *Alive* possible. The music and comedy clips, featuring the Flying Lizards, Mitchell Kriegman, and William Wegman, among others, might compete with their commercial counterparts: they are funny, imaginative, and the music is catchy. But the mass cult viewer the series is designed to attract could easily conclude from these shows that video art is just another name for hip commercial TV.

The only departure from the series' formula of shorts, compilations, and works derived from performances was Dan Reeves's *Smothering Dreams.* Due to time limitations, Ward had to eliminate several tapes she wanted to program but was particularly adamant about including Vietnam veteran Reeves's testament to the memories and traumas of war. An extended political essay, *Smothering Dreams* employs stock war footage, Vietnam news films, redramatized childhood scenes, and a voiceover that comments on the visuals without explaining them. Despite his subject's political implications, however, Reeves offers no analysis beyond personal reflection, waffling between portraying war as an experience no one should and everyone should have.

Each program in the series opened and closed with remarks by host Susan Stamberg, the anchor for National Public Radio's *All Things Considered.* In the shows with several clips, she also appeared between tapes, often shown in a tight head shot framed by a special effects TV screen: the proverbial talking head in a new wave box. Ward chose Stamberg for the role of mediator because she was "neither celebrity nor entirely unknown," and so the perfect foil for *Alive*'s big name artists with little popular currency. The effect of the wraparound was meant to be "introductory, not interpretative," Ward explained, and for the most part, Stamberg ignored the work in favor of the artist. Interviews were the most common filler, an emphasis that echoes mainstream television's preoccupation with personalities a la *Entertainment Tonight.* Despite Ward's disclaimer, packaging is always a form of interpretation.

Perhaps what's most remarkable about the series as a whole was the absence of serious commentary on television entertainment and its social functions. The producers of *Alive* wanted it, and got it, both ways. On one hand, the series featured video that claims to contradict the conventions and assumptions of television. But *Alive* also exploited those conventions in its quest for a mass audience. The practical result is that the program has been renewed for next season. Ward projects a budget of $1.5-million of the 1986 series, with an expanded 10-week schedule, including a one-hour special and three to five commissioned shows. She hopes to raise the money through corporate underwriting rather than depending on patronage from private foundations. The NEA has already committed funding for the series' second round. As *Alive* moves away from acquisition toward original production, viewers will get a better sense of what Ward means by "good broadcast television." And, undoubtedly, videomakers eager to find production funds will too—and take note.

The significance of *Alive* as the only video art vehicle on national public TV in the U.S. should not be underrated. True, in the month preceding the series' premiere on WNET, the New York PBS station presented its own series, *New Television,* four weeks of video art for local aficionados. Also, the New Television Workshop in Boston reentered the video art business in 1983 as the Institute of Contemporary Art's partner in the Contemporary Arts Television Fund; the first CAT Fund tapes were aired last fall on WGBH and a series is slotted for this November. Like *Alive,* however, both projects exhibit the uniformity of curatorial entities. Nothing like the eclectic, sometimes daring programming of *VTR* exists on PBS. Once upon a time—not so long ago—artists thought that public television should allow truly diverse uses of the most powerful cultural form—broadcast TV. Judging by the staus quo, i.e., *Alive from Off Center,* only minor variations on old, hackneyed formulas now represent what's "new." Via *Alive,* some recent performance and video art has been seen by exponentially expanded audiences. But because of the limits of *Alive,* other artists who haven't embraced mass culture will still be denied PBS support. Should we accept this as just another fact of television life?

Barbara Osborn is a New York City-based freelance consultant for independent media projects.

ROTTERDAM REDUX

Jonathan Rosenbaum



Rotterdam's flexible programming philosophy makes possible the screening of television programs like "Overdrawn at the Memory Bank," from PBS's "American Playhouse."
Photo: Alex Durkay

Having attended festivals of many shapes and sizes around the world, I can think of none that is more conducive to the serious viewing of original, offbeat work than the Rotterdam Film Festival. While Rotterdam lacks the global media coverage and accompanying hoopla of a Cannes, Toronto, Venice, Filmex, or Berlin, the festival offers filmmakers a congenial and sympathetic setting. Significantly, American independents as diverse as Jim Jarmusch and Mark Rappaport—as well as European figures like Manoel de Oliveira and Raul Ruiz—made their mark there long before they were treated to New York Film Festival premieres.

A cash prize is awarded each year to a film selected by the Dutch critics. Most recently, it went to Ruiz's *Manoel a l'Ile de Merveilles,* a French-Portuguese television co-production shot in 16mm, comprising three 50-minute episodes. However, the overall spirit of the festival is anything but competitive, and as rule the critics prize will go to a film that the critics feel is deserving of special attention rather than an audience favorite. In 1984, the prize went to U.S. avant-garde filmmaker Peter Hutton for a series of short nonnarrative films that had not been widely attended. Ruiz's *Manoel,* shown only in Portuguese with simultaneous voiceover translation, was not seen by the majority of the festival goers either.

Evening galas are presented nightly at the Luxor, a large and rather plush commercial theater located across the street from the Rotterdam Hilton. All other films in the festival proper are shown about a quarter of a mile away at the Lantaren, a four-story complex containing the festival offices, a good-sized restaurant and cafe, a room for viewing videotapes, and no less than half a dozen screening rooms—most of which are in continuous operation from 9 a.m. until well after midnight. Most films are repeated several times, although there are often last-minute changes in the program and schedule on a day-to-day basis. Some of these are reflected in the festival newspaper, which appears daily in both Dutch and English, and usually functions as an indispensable guide to what has just happened or is about to happen.

While everyone on the affable festival staff speaks English, the spur-of-the-moment reschedulings can create confusion. Last year, for example, I was incorrectly billed as the director of Leslie Thornton's *Adynata* at the screenings I arranged for her film at the last minute. Although these occasional glitches do appear, they are nearly always quickly remedied, thanks to the festival's good will and intimacy.

In 1984, the festival inaugurated an international Film and TV market at the Hilton. Apart from being the hotel where a good many of the festival guests stay, the Hilton also houses other festival activities, most notably the nightly interviews with directors, stars, and other figures accompanying the Luxor premieres in a relaxed nightclub setting.

Both the eclecticism and the energy of the Rotterdam Festival are in large part the personal expression of Hubert Bals, the festival's director. Bals's unpredictable yet distinctive taste rules all the selections (aside from those available on the Market), and his relaxed intensity leads to an atmosphere that resembles, in the words of filmmaker Jackie Raynal, "the Telluride of Europe." As a result, Rotterdam attracts a rare mix of filmmakers. Charles Burnett, Alex Cox, Robert Downey, Philippe Garel, Henry Jaglom, Joseph Mankiewicz, Eric Rohmer, John Sayles, and Andrei Tartovsky are among those who have attended in recent years.

Rotterdam is also flexible about screening films and tapes of a variety of running times. They range from extended television series to hour-long featurettes, oddball shorts, and documentaries of varying lengths. This year's nonfeature lineup included the German TV series *Heimat;* Chantal Akerman's *L'Homme a la Valise;* Elizabeth Lennard's *Tokyo Melody,* a portrait of Japanese composer and pop star Ryuichi Sakamoto; Mark Peploe's 35mm half-hour adaptation of a D.H. Lawrence story, *Samson and Delilah;* three films about labor unions by Chicago's Kartemquin Collective; and Amnon Buchbinder's *Criminal Language* and *Oroboros,* both theoretical, narrative avant-garde films. All these films, which might easily have been overlooked or ignored at larger festivals, found audiences in Rotterdam. Working on the principle of target audiences, Rotterdam proves that less can be more under the right conditions.

The fifteenth Rotterdam Film Festival will be held Jan. 24–Feb. 2, 1986. In addition, the third Cine-m-art, or film market, provides producers and their reps with the opportunity to do serious business. Hubert Bals will be in New York in mid-November. The U.S. contact is Wendy Lidell, 125 E. 4th St., New York, NY 10003, (212) 475-8237. 16mm and 35mm; shorts, docs, and features. Rotterdam Film Festival, Endrachtsweg 21, 3012 LB Rotterdam, Netherlands, tel. (010) 13 33 99, telex. 21378 fintr nl.

Jonathan Rosenbaum is the author of Moving Places (Harper & Row, 1980), Midnight Movies (with J. Hoberman; Harper & Row, 1983), and Film: The Front Line 1983 (Arden Press).

BERLIN SALZGEBERTALKZ

Since its inception in 1951, the Berlin International Film Festival—held in mid-February in West Berlin, has achieved a reputation as a major showcase for films from around the world. The list of past participants reads like a roster for a filmmakers' hall of fame: Hitchcock, Truffaut, Godard, Kurosawa, Wilder, Fassbinder And while Cannes boasts a glamorous Riviera setting and Venice has the Lido, Berlin is a city with a weighty political ambience—dominated by the Wall and still populated with U.S., French, British, and Soviet occupation troops.

Manfred Salzgeber, director of the Information Section of the festival has long been active in the distribution of independent and avant-garde films in Europe, and he is closely associated with the contemporary art film movement in West Germany. As director of the Information Section—organized around a theme, genre, the *oeuvre* of one director, or a national cinema—Salzgeber travels widely, screening films. Recently, he visited New York City, along with Berliniade director Moritz de Hadeln and his wife Erika, director of the all-documentary Nyon Film Festival in Switzerland, in search of films for both events. The Berlin fest is scheduled for February 14–25, 1986; Nyon took place last October. *—Anthony L. Greco*

Anthony Greco: What types of U.S. films do well in Berlin?

Manfred Salzgeber: Quite often films that are not successful in New York do well in Berlin. For example, the comedy *It Don't Pay To Be an Honest Citizen,* by Jacob Burckhardt, is typical. It suffered in New York—received a bad review in the *Village Voice* and was gone. Also, *Repo Man* played well. I think there's a special audience in Berlin for New York and West Coast art films, and films like *Blood Simple,* although that was made in Texas. Even subtitled they do well. Critics enjoy these films, although *Superman* and other blockbusters have been popular with audiences, too.

AG: What aspects of U.S. culture interest Berlin audiences?

MS: U.S. films are usually sold out. There is a bond between European and American culture. English-language films do the best; audiences like the independent work, while they think a lot of Hollywood films are for teenagers. Films like *The Deer Hunter* and *Death Wish* were rejected by intellectuals, but publicly successful. We have the same division of specialized audiences and mass market as in the United States. In postwar Europe, many people are bilingual, but sometimes we have difficulty in subtitling. I'm now working on writing subtitles for some films, but there isn't always an exact translation or equivalent for certain American idioms.

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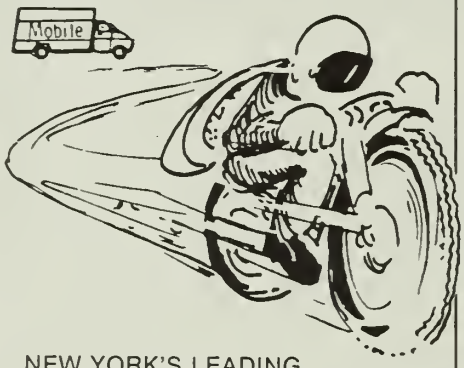
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AG: How do you decide which films to take?
MS: For competition, films must be potentially successful, commercially and internationally. With all the different countries producing films today—countries like Australia, Thailand, etc., that weren't competing several years ago—that's important. We tend to take films that may get theatrical distribution. The Forum, on the other hand, takes films that will only be shown on television and in film societies.
AG: Do you take films that have appeared at other festivals?
MS: No, except Nyon, which is our sister festival. Many of the same people screen films at both festivals. Nyon is much smaller and attended almost exclusively by filmmakers, a more select audience, more specialized, and the program is devoted to documentaries. For example, *The Times of Harvey Milk* played at Nyon and then Berlin.
AG: Because of the location of Berlin and its political importance, are there any political criteria for choices?
MS: No. In 1979, the socialist countries withdrew from the festival when *The Deer Hunter* was shown by Moritz de Hadeln's predecessor, Wolf Donner. But Moritz, who previously directed the Locarno festival, has an international reputation as a good festival director and used his contacts to bring the socialist countries back. Now, everything is normalized. We won't show aggressive films or films that distort history, such as *The Deer Hunter,* which has scenes of American prisoners being held and tortured in tiger cages, when in reality it was the U.S. soldiers who did such things to their prisoners.

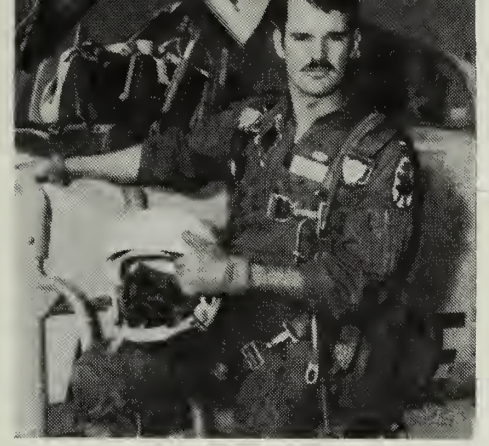
There is space for critical films from all sides, as long as they are not false. Cinema in West Berlin is dominated by U.S. companies, so Third World and socialist countries are very welcome at the festival. If it is an extremely successful film from the Soviet Union, it may find a distributor, but may this happens once a year. There are 100 U.S. films for one socialist in commercial theaters. There are no political considerations at the festival unless it is obvious that a film is propaganda. Then we reject it. When making selections, that becomes apparent after just a few frames.
AG: Of the U.S. films selected for Berlin, what percentage will be major studio releases compared to independent productions?
MS: Some films that are released by a small company do well, and then perhaps qualify as a major. About eighty percent are from major studios, twenty percent independent, but it's hard to define a major studio.
AG: How can a filmmaker maximize participation in the festival?
MS: A film should be available on 35mm, even if it is not made in 35mm. A 16mm print might be shown to an audience of 100, but the 35mm films get the mass exposure at the festival. A filmmaker who takes this step should enter the main competition; most distributors come to the main competition, and 16mm films are regarded as special. If a film is not accepted in one category, the filmmaker should try to submit it in another. A filmmaker should bring promotional materials, hang out and talk to people attending the festival, and attend the special screenings. Last year this strategy proved successful for U.S. filmmakers. For exposure to the press and intellectuals, go to the Forum; for commercial exposure, go to the special screenings.
AG: What opportunities exist for exhibition, sale, etc.?
MS: There is a buyers-only market for quality films; it is not entirely open. Last year, about 400 international buyers attended that market. The majors have their own distribution arrangements, so they don't need a film festival to showcase their films. For others it is quite efficient to premiere at Berlin because it is held at the beginning of the year and buyers are buying.
AG: How do you schedule films?
MS: We try to give everything a good opportunity to be seen. In Berlin, every film is screened three different times.
AG: What do you think of the U.S. independent film scene?
MS: Internationally, it's still the avant garde. There is so much talent, so many ingeniously made films. To me, it's number one in the world. It's such a cultural melting pot, such a huge country. It's unique.

Sections for U.S. films at Berlin are the International Competition, the Information Section, and the Jungforum. Berlin programmers include the festival's director Moritz de Hadeln for the Competition, Manfred Salzgeber for the Information Section, which has grown considerably in recent years, and Ulrich and Erica Gregor and the Friends of the German Film Archive for the Jungforum (see "In Brief," The Independent, October 1985). In addition, the festival has an extensive Film Market with fees. The U.S. liaison for the festival is Gordon Hitchens, 214 W. 85th St., #3W, New York, NY 10024, (212) 877-6856. A sample application is available at AIVF. Deadlines: forms, Dec. 2, films, Dec. 9. Contact Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin, Budapester Strasse 50, D-1000 Berlin 30. Tel. (030)254 89 0, Telex, 185 255 fest d.

Anthony L. Greco, a freelance writer in New York, edits the New York City Film/Video Council's newsletter.

OH OBERHAUSEN

In January 1986 Karola Gramann, the new director of the Oberhausen Festival of short films in Germany, will be at the office of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers to screen and select for the April 21–27 event. This important European competition, now in its thirty-second year, seeks German premieres of 16mm



Dr. Charlie Clements in 1960. His life was chronicled in Deborah Shaffer and David Goodman's documentary "Witness to War," shown at the 1985 Oberhausen Film Festival.
Courtesy filmmakers

and 35mm productions in the categories of "social documentaries," "new developments in animation," "experimental," and "short dramatic films." Six cash prizes are awarded, and numerous jury prizes and honorable mentions are given.

U.S. films highlighted last year included *The Car of Your Dreams,* by Bob Rogers, and *Witness to War,* by Deborah Shaffer and David Goodman. U.S. jury members were Carroll Blue and Herbert Feinstein. Other jurors came from Canada, Thailand, Hungary, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain.

Although there is no official market at Oberhausen, it is a place to meet critics, filmmakers, programmers, and distributors who know the festival's reputation for exhibiting the most interesting and progressive social, political, and artistic shorts from around the world. Press conferences, workshops, and discussions are scheduled daily. In their 1979 200-page chronicle of Oberhausen's history, Ronald and Dorothea Holloway wrote, "Oberhausen usually got the pick of the field in the international short films. Once a director was 'discovered' at the festival, he frequently came back, even without a film. The reason? Here, trends were started, and criticism was heard and appreciated. Moreover, the International Jury consisted of independent professionals."

Oberhausen boasts an impressive list of participants over the years: Chris Marker, Shirley Clarke, Willard Van Dyke, Robert Breer, Roman Polanski, and Werner Herzog, among others. On the documentary side, Robert Flaherty and John Grierson have been credited with setting the standards and the tone for Oberhausen. Last year's special features included a historical retrospective on "Railroad and Film," screening programs like "Woman and Video," "Music and Film," "Award Winners from the Cracow Short Film Festival," and a special children's film festival.

The exact dates of Karola Gramann's visit were unavailable at press time. For more information and applications, send SASE immediately to

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AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012. The deadline for shipping films to AIVF is late December. —*Robert Aaronson*

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement,** and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

● *CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL*, April 4–20, Ohio. Last year's event showcased a bumper crop of 59 films from 19 countries, but they'll probably reduce the numbers for the 10th anniversary event to make room for special programs to celebrate the milestone. The director, Jonathan Forman, travels to Toronto & Montreal & occasionally visits New York & Filmex in search of international features, shorts & documentaries otherwise unavailable to northern Ohio audiences. 15 U.S. independent films, shown in a special section at the Strosacker Auditorium at Case Western Reserve University, included *Paul Cadmus, The Last Pullman Car, Kid Gloves, Making a Difference, Fish,* the locally produced *Blind Date* & others. *Wildrose & Stranger than Paradise* were featured in the main part of the festival. 16mm & 35mm only. Video OK for pre-selection. No fee. Deadline: Jan 1. Contact Jonathan Forman, Cleveland International Film Festival, 1501 Euclid Ave., Ste. 510, Cleveland, OH 44115; (216) 241-7686 .

● *FILMEX*, March, Los Angeles. Location, scope, programming acumen, attendance figures & publicity make the Los Angeles Film Expo, which will celebrate its 15th anniversary in 1986, the king of domestic festivals. Last year over 300 shorts, narrative features & docs from 40 countries were screened. Nell Cox's *The Roommate* won the first ever feature competition & *Before Stonewall* won for best documentary in a field of 16 entries. According to festival director Suzanne McCormick, at least one quarter of all the films screened were U.S. productions. Plans for 1986 include seminars and special events produced in partnership with IFP/West, the Directors Guild, Women in Film, the International Documentary Association & others. Attendance consistently hovers around 100,000. Artistic director Ken Wlaschin came to the event from the London Film Festival in 1984. He programs his international selection from sources including Berlin & Venice. McCormick appointed a floating "distributor liaison" to help match potential buyers and sellers. All the LA distributors and studios usually check out the fare along with visitors from Cannes, Moscow, Munich, Berlin, Taormina & Haifa. U.S. festival reps came from Chicago, Miami, Denver, Mill Valley, etc.

Over 100 short films were screened in 1985, but specialized films can get lost in the frenetic atmosphere. Narrative & documentary features included Shirley Clarke's *Ornette: Made in America,* John Antonelli's *Kerouac,* Kirby Dick's *Private Practices: The Story of a Sex Surrogate,* Jill Godmilow's *Far from Poland* & Andrew Silver's *Return.* Discussions follow most screenings when directors are present. Covered by the press & *Variety.* Accepts films in 16mm & 35mm completed within the last 12 months. Since the festival admits that they cannot look at everything & that they try to program thematically, McCormick said interested filmmakers should immediately write Wlaschin with info on their films. Include a detailed synopsis, format, running time, production credits & a bio. Note past festival participation & other exhibition. Be brief but compelling. Contact Ken Wlaschin, Artistic Director, Filmex, Box 1739, Hollywood, CA 90028.

● *NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL*, May 16–18, San Francisco & Oakland. Competition for 16mm & ¾" video produced primarily for the educational market & released after Jan. 1984. Categories include: physical sciences & math; history, government & social studies; business; career & vocational guidance; language & fine art; recreation, travel & sports; teacher education. Separate competition for filmstrips and student productions. Fees: $55–125, depending on length. Student fees lower. Judging criteria include "educational value, achievement of objectives, creativity, continuity & technical excellence." Honorable mentions, first & second place awards in 10 subcategories plus special awards & 15 overall category awards. Contact Sue Davies, National Educational Film Festival, 314 E. 10th St., Oakland, CA 94606; (415) 465-6885.

● *NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS*, March/April, New York. Organized & programmed by the Film Society of Lincoln Center & the department of film at the Museum of Modern Art, New Directors celebrates its 15th outing in 1986. According to festival administrator Jack Barth, the purpose of this noncompetitive event is to "introduce directors who are not well known in America or to the film-going public:" Programming responsibilities fall to Richard Roud, Joanne Koch & Wendy Keyes from Lincoln Center & MOMA film curators Adrienne Mancia, Larry Kardish & their colleagues. In 1985, U.S. work included Leon Ichaso's *Crossover Dreams;* Deborah Shaffer & David Goodman's *Witness to War;* Su Friedrich's *Ties That Bind;* Martin Bell, Mary Ellen Mark & Cheryl McCall's *Streetwise;* John Hanson's *Wildrose;* Richard Goodman & Carma Hinton's *Small Happiness.* There are no categories & although the event is "featured oriented," shorts & "featurettes" are screened. Documentaries accounted for the majority of U.S. films. Work must originate on film, 16mm or 35mm. Video OK for pre-selection. Deadline: Jan. 1. No fee. Contact: Jack Barth, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 140 W. 65th St., New York, NY 10023; (212) 877-1800.

● *SANTA FE FILM EXPOSITION*, March, New Mexico. A local event, in its fifth year, offers a mixed bag of about 20 docs, narratives, experimental shorts, etc., to audiences in the hundreds per screening. Linda Klosky & a committee at the Center for Contemporary Art consult a national network of programmers & rely on festival word-of-mouth to select invited works. Last year's selection included *Low Visibility, The Times of Harvey Milk, Shimmering Beast, Film Wipe Film, Ghostdance & Persistence of Memory.* All filmmakers receive a per-minute screening fee. Some filmmakers brought in for the event. They do not screen unsolicited entries, but are interested in finding out about new films. Producers are invited to send written material about their work by December. Contact: Linda Klosky, Center for Contemporary Art, 1050 Old Pecos Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87501; (505) 982-1338.

● *UNITED STATES FILM FESTIVAL* , January 17–26, Park City, Utah. Key requirements for juried Independent Film Competition: U.S. independent productions only in 16mm & 35mm, produced or

released after Jan. 1, 1985. Dramatic films 70 mins. & over; docs 55 mins. & over. All video formats OK for pre-selection. Fee: $40. Entry form required. Deadline: Nov. 15. Filmmakers invited to attend. $2,500 each for winning narrative & doc. Contact USFF, Sundance Institute, 19 Exchange Pl., Salt Lake City, UT 84111; (801) 325-FILM.

FOREIGN

● *ASOLO INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ANIMATED FILMS,* January, Italy. Short films only. Non-competitive. 16mm & 35mm. No fee. Deadline: Dec. Contact Guiseppe Marton, Festival Internazionale del Cartone Animato, c/o Amministrazione Provinciale Viale C, Battisti, 31100 Treviso, Italy, tel. (0422) 42701.

● *AVORIAZ INTERNATIONAL FANTASY FILM FESTIVAL,* January, France. Competitive event for 35mm sci-fi, horror & supernatural European premieres. Last year's selections included Steve Barron's *Electric Dreams,* Jon Ruben's *Dreamscape* & Stewart Raffull's *The Philadelphia Experiment.* Robert De Niro & John Hurt served on the jury. Fest, which has been growing yearly, takes place at a European ski resort. Distributors use event as launch pad/test market for upcoming releases. No fee. Contact Festival International du Film Fantastique, 33 Ave. Mac-Mahon, 75017 Paris, France; tel. 755-7140; telex PROMODM 640736 F.

● *CINEMA DU REEL,* March 8–16, Paris. This festival, now in its 8th year, provides a major European venue for ethnographic, sociological & anthropological documentaries. The International Competition awards prize money totaling 70,000 francs. In 1985 John Bonnamo's *Sacred Hearts* won the short feature award and Carma Hinton & Richard Gordon's *Small Happiness* was purchased by Canal Plus television. Other U.S. films screened at the Pompidou Center included *The Good Fight, The Great Weirton Steal, The Highly Exalted, The Hutterites, Invisible Citizens: Japanese Americans, Of Grance & Steal, Rock 'n' Roll Disciples, Streetwise, Los Sures & The Times of Harvey Milk.* Approximately 70 works were presented, plus retrospectives & special screenings. Festival director Marie-Christine Navacelle has visited New York to scout for films in the past, but will not come in 1985; selections will be made in Paris. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, ¾". Cassettes recommended fo pre-selection. Work must have been completed in the calendar years 1984–85 & not previously submitted to Cinema du Reel, aired on French TV, or awarded a prize at a French festival. Deadline for forms: Dec. 15 (send SASE to AIVF). Synopsis, dialogue list, bio & stills requested with forms. Deadline for films: Jan. 6. Contact festival office before shipping cassettes or films. A group shipment of selected films from the U.S. may be handled from AIVF office. No entry fee. Contact Bibliotheque Publique d'Infomation Cinema du Reel, Centre Georges Pompidou, 75191 Paris Cedex 04, France; tel. 277-1213; telex 212726 F.

● *FILM DE FEMMES FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE CRETEIL,* March 14–23, France. Last year, Jackie Buet, programmer for the 7th international festival of films by women directors, viewed over 70 works submitted for pre-selection at AIVF. They selected *Committed,* by Sheila McLaughlin & Lynne Tillman, *Far from Poland,* by Jill Godmilow & shorts & featurettes including *Fading,* by Melvie Arslanian, *Miraj,* by Molly Burgess, *Table for One,* by Doris Chase, *Bent Time,* by Barbara Hammer, *Brooklyn Bridge,* by Catherine Karnow & *The Great Sadness of Zohara,* by Nina Menkes. The full international slate included about 70 films in competition for an audience, jury prize & press prize. According to festival literature, the overall audience numbered about 20,000, including 200 press & 30 festival representatives. 40 foreign distributors & producers were registered for the concurrent Film Market. Selection screenings for 1986 will take place at AIVF in Nov. Submit work immediately until Nov. 15. 16 & 35mm narratives, docs & shorts. No student/amateur films. ¾" transfers preferred for pre-selection. Include one-sheet synopsis & prod. info. Fees for entry: 1 cassette up to 30 min. $5.; 30–60 min. $10; 2 cassettes $20; 16mm film up to 30 min. $10; 30–60 min. $15; over 60 min. $20. Send work to Creteil, c/o R. Aaronson, FIVF, 625 Broadway, N.Y., NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. Include cash or check payable to FIVF.

● *HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* March 27–April 11. 1986 heralds the 10th anniversary for this major Asian cultural event, showcasing Asian, European, North & South American, African & Australian films. Work tends to be drawn from major international festival circuit. In a field of 160 films, U.S. shorts & features included Jackie Raynal's *Hotel New York,* David Ehrlich's *Point,* Curtis Choy's *The Fall of the I-Hotel,* John Antonelli's *Kerouac* & Sol Rubin's *Carnival Fantasy.* Non-competitive. Entries may be in 16mm, 35mm or ¾". Fest pays RT shipping. Send video for pre-selection. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact Cynthia Lium, Hong Kong International Film Festival, Hong Kong Coliseum Annex Building, Parking Deck Floor, KCR Kowloon Station, 8 Cheong Wan Rd., Kowloon Hong Kong; tel. 3-642217, telex 38484 USDHK HX .

● *STUTTGART INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FILM FESTIVAL,* January/February, W. Germany. In 1982, 10 U.S. films were featured in a program topping 125 including work by Jane Aaron, Will Vinton & David Ehrlich. Bi-annual. According to the British Council's Directory of International Film & Video Festivals, "preference is given to animated films of artistic and experimental interest." No features. Formats: 35mm & 16mm. Awards include 5000 DM & Kodak film materials prize worth 1000 DM. No fee. Contact: Stuttgarten Trickfilmtage, Kommunalis Kino, Kernerstrasse 42b, 7000 Stuttgart 1, Germany; tel. (0711)242579.

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IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION

Mary Guzzy

The independent feature movement is alive and well, as evidenced by the latest efforts of veteran producers. **Dim Sum**, director Wayne Wang's second feature, was presented at the 1985 Cannes Film Festival Director's fortnight, and has reached audiences in San Francisco, New York and Europe. The story of an intimate mother-daughter relationship, *Dim Sum* treads a fine line between life and art, as the film draws heavily on the real-life relationship of its lead actors, Kim and Laureen Chew. The protagonist's struggle to be an independent contemporary woman without abandoning traditional Chinese values yields a delicate sampling of the many levels of conflict within all families, heightened by the confrontation between cultures. Admirers of Wang's first feature, *Chan Is Missing,* will recognize many of *Dim Sum*'s cast. Wang's future plans include the film adaptation of Louis Chu's novel, *Eat a Bowl of Tea,* to be produced by American Playhouse.

Spike Lee's second feature, provocatively titled **She's Gotta Have It**, tells the story of Nola Darling, a woman who enjoys sex and maintains three lovers to enjoy it with. Lee explores the double standard by which the sexual relationships of men and women are judged, presenting Nola's story from the perspective of her friends, lovers, family, and the woman herself. *She's Gotta Have It* will be completed this month and will run approximately 100 minutes. It was shot in 12 days on a budget of under $25,000 on location in Brooklyn, New York. Funding was provided by the New York State Council on the Arts and private investors. The film was shot by the very busy Ernest Dickerson, and the music was composed by the filmmaker's father, Bill Lee. In addition to writing, directing, and editing the film, Spike Lee also makes his acting debut in *She's Gotta Have It* as B-Boy Mars Blackmon, one of Nola's lovers.

The dark underbelly of the urban drug culture and its captive members are explored in **Gringo**, the latest project of director Lech Kowalski, maker of *D.O.A.,* with Sid Vicious and the Sex Pistols. *Gringo*'s story revolves around a man whose existence is centered on the needle, portrayed by the aptly named John Spacely. The 85-minute film takes place largely in New York City's drug havens, exposing the unvarnished reality of drug dependency while avoiding overt value judgment or commentary. *Gringo,* produced by Gareth E. Newell and Ann S. Barish, received its first screenings in New York in August and September.

Recent documentary projects display the eclecticism typical of the independent scene. Producer/director Meri Weingarten of New York's Meridian Productions has completed a 37-minute 16mm color documentary, **Waking Up to Rape**, about three women facing life after sexual assault. To retake control of their lives and promote psychological healing, the targets of sex crimes learn self-defense skills. In its exploration of feminity, passivity, and victimization, the film uses news clips, interviews, and verite footage. *Waking Up to Rape* was made on a budget of $70,000, provided in part by the American Film Institute, NYSCA, and the Women's Project of the Film Fund. Associate producer Diane Pokorny and director of photography Nancy Schreiber worked with Weingarten on the film.



Nola Darling (Tracey Camilla Johns) enjoys a rare respite from her several lovers in Spike Lee's new feature, "She's Gotta Have It."

Courtesy filmmaker

Alfred Guzzetti, Susan Meiselas, and Richard Rogers have completed **Living at Risk: The Story of a Nicaraguan Famly**, a one-hour documentary about a privileged family who worked against the Somoza regime and remained after the revolution to help rebuild Nicaragua. Although the family patriarch does not approve of the Sandinista government, all other adult members of the family support the government and are involved in the creation of a stable society despite pressures from Contra forces. *Living at Risk,* distributed by New Yorker Films, opened at the Film Forum in New York City on October 30.

Exiled Black South African poet Dennis Brutus is profiled in **Stubborn Hope: A South African Fighter.** The 28-minute color film by Peggy Stern, Nick Doob, and Ann Schaetzel chronicles the poet's 1984 journey across the U.S. to the Los Angeles Olympics. Although the U.S. State Department has termed Brutus an "undesirable," he has finally been granted political asylum in the United States.

Santa Fe's Public Media Arts has released **Genbaku/Killed by the Atomic Bomb**, a historical documentary film exploring the fate of 10 American POWs held prisoner in Hiroshima when the first nuclear weapons were used against Japan. The film is produced by Gary DeWalt.

The Lion's Roar, a look at Tibetan Buddhism, focuses on the remarkable life and death of the sixteenth Gyalwang Karmapa, one of the faith's most important holy men. The sixteenth Karmapa brought Tibetan Buddhism to its current home in Sikkim, India, at the time of the Communist Revolution in China in 1954. Producers James Hoagland and Kenneth Green and director Mark Elliot, all followers of Budhhism, worked without salaries on the film; another of the Karmapa's many friends, actor James Coburn, narrated the documentary for no fee. *The Lion's Roar* took four years to complete, and according to associate producer Jim Vest, most of the time was spent raising the $85,000 budget. After opening at New York's Margaret Mead Film Festival and the Asia Society in September, the film premiered theatrically

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A middle-class family, profiled in "Living at Risk," by Alfred Guzzetti, Susan Meiselas, and Richard Rogers, describes life in postrevolutionary Nicaragua.
Courtesy filmmakers

September 22 at Denver's Ogden Theatre. It will be seen this month at Landmark Theatres in Berkeley and Los Angeles, and in Seattle during early December.

A videotape with a spiritual/educational bent has been created by television director and videographer Dov Lederberg of Jerusalem. His two-hour tape, **The Sacred Letters: Video Meditations on the Hebrew Alphabet,** attempts "to integrate advanced experimental video techniques with Jewish mystical ideas." Intended for interactive home use and religious and educational study, *The Sacred Letters* combines electronic special effects and Hassidic melodies with an English commentary that relates each of the Hebrew letters to ideas in Jewish mysticism. The tape is meant to be absorbed in partial viewings, played out of sequence, its frames frozen and sequences repeated in the true interactive spirit.

Short film director Ken Liotti has licensed his most recent film, **Last Shave,** to Showtime/The Movie Channel. A 16-minute color narrative about the eviction of an old-time barber from his shop, *Last Shave* was produced at the 1985 Advanced Film Production Workshop at New York University and garnered the Louis B. Mayer Award, first prize at the Birmingham International Educational Film Festival, and third prize at the Mobil Film Festival this year. Liotti's other independent shorts, *Sneakers, The Hero,* and *The Audition* have all been licensed to major cable services including Home Box Office, Cinemax, and Bravo.

DISTRIBUTION DIRECTORY

Dim Sum: Orion Classics, Orion Pictures Corporation, 711 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10022, (212) 758-5100. *She's Gotta Have It:* Spike Lee, Forty Acres and a Mule Filmworks, 132 Adelphi St., Brooklyn, NY 11205, (718) 624-3703; *Gringo:* Jeffrey L. Wise Publicity, 45 First Ave., New York, NY 10003, (212) 460-8373; *Waking Up to Rape:* Meri Weingarten, Meridian Productions, 530 Second Ave., New York, NY 10016, (212) 685-2733/582-9651; *Living at Risk: The Story of a Nicaraguan Family:* New Yorker Films, 16 W. 61st St., New York, NY 10023, (212) 247-6110; *Stubborn Hope: A South African Fighter:* Peggy Stern, 205 Mulberry St., New York, NY 10012, (212) 226-5725; *Genbaku/Killed by the Atomic Bomb:* Public Media Arts, Inc., 535 Cordova Rd., Ste. 200, Santa Fe, NM 87501, (505) 982-4757; *Lion's Roar:* Centre Productions, Inc., 1800 30th St., #207, Boulder, CO 80301, (303) 444-1166; *Sacred Letters: Video Meditations on the Hebrew Alphabet:* Dov Lederberg, c/o Chanah & Menachem Persoff, 314 Avenue N, Brooklyn, NY 11230, (718) 336-4585; *Last Shave:* Ken Liotti, 211 Thompson St., #C, New York, NY 10012, (212) 254-8452.

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NOTICES

The Independent's **Notices** are undergoing renovations. Beginning with this issue, the section titled "Editing Facilities" has been renamed "Postproduction." All notices related to editing, negative matching, sound transfers, and other postproduction services will appear in this section. Preproduction, production, and other film and videomaking services will be listed under "Freelancers."

In the March 1986 issue we will divide the **Notices** into two categories: **Classifieds** and **Notices.** The new **Classifieds** column will include all listings now appearing under the "Buy ● Rent ● Sell," "Freelancers," and "Postproduction" headings. There will be a $15 charge and 250 character limit for each entry for one issue. Listings in these sections will be restricted to **members only.** Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion and indicate the number of issues on the submitted copy. Each classified must be typed, double-spaced, and worded exactly as it should appear. Remember the 250 character restriction (approximately 5 lines). All submissions must be accompanied by a check or money order–no cash, please. And **no** classifieds will be accepted by telephone.

Deadlines for **Notices** and **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, two months prior to the cover date of the issue., e.g., November 8 for the January/February issue. Members should keep in mind the dates of our double issues: January/February and August/September. Mail classifieds to: Independent Classifieds, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

Buy ● Rent ● Sell

● *FOR SALE:* JVC KY310, 3-tube saticon color video camera w/ Fujinon 12x servo zoom lens w/ macro, DC battery, AC adaptor, cables, Anton Bauer battery adaptor, quick release plate, carrying case. Less than a year old, $5,250. Supervised test available. (212) 874-0132, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Eclair ACL 200′ mag. Best offer. (914) 452-5807, NY.

● *FOR SALE:* JVC 4400 ¾″ portable recorder, AC charger w/ 2 batteries & soft case, $950. 16mm Rezzolini LW-16 camera, 9.5–95mm Angenieux zoom, single-system sound head & amp, batteries, charger & case, $1,550. Visual Evidence Inc., (512) 299-1400, TX.

● *FOR SALE:* Surplus 16mm color reversal filmstock, ECO 7252, 50 (100′) rolls @ $9/100′; EF 7242 4 (400′) rolls, 82 (100′) rolls @ $8/100′. Stock in good cond., samples available. Mark Mori, Box 5202, Station E, Atlanta, GA 30307, (404) 627-2485.

● *FOR SALE:* ¾″ off-line editing system w/ 2 Sony 2860s w/ convergence ECS-16 & digital tape timer, $2,000. David Sinamore, (212) 582-5265, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Complete ¾″ editing system: JVC CR-8250U tape handler, ¾″ videocassette recorder, JVC CP-5550U player/edit source, JVC RM-86U editing control unit, all necessary cable hookups included. 1½ years old, in excellent cond. $7,200 complete. (201) 721-4067, NJ.

● *FOR SALE:* JVC KY310 3-tube saticon camera in perfect cond. (used for less than 30 hrs) w/ 2 DC batteries, AC adaptor, cable & carrying case. No lens. $3,000. Call (518) 854-3068 for info. Camera can also be seen & tested in New York. (212) 777-5100, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* New Panasonic ½″ VHS-NV 8500 editing system, incl. NV A-500 controller, 2 decks & 2 12″ monitors. Rental: weekly, $600; monthly, $1,300. Kathleen, (212) 293-2000, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Nagra 111, no sync, $800. Arri-S pkg. w/ Zeiss 12.5–75, 50mm Cooke lens, 2 400′ mags, var. spd. mtr., battery & case, $1,900. (414) 263-7478, WI.

● *FOR SALE:* Refitted tripod w/ gyroscopic head, wooden legs, spreader & handle. Ideal for heavier film cameras. $285 or best offer. (212) 874-0132, NYC.

● *FOR HIRE:* Ikegami HL-79A , Sony BVU-110, lighting, full audio, including radio mics, automobile, driver/ENG/EFP engineer. From $450/day. Mark Kaplan, (212) 614-0799, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Nagra 111, internal xtal, overhauled, very clean, $1,100. 16mm preview moviola, opt. & mag., very good, $600. Eidsvik, 270 Pine Forest Dr., Athens, GA 30606, (404) 549-4430.

● *FOR SALE:* Broadcast-tuned Sony DXC-M3 camera w/ highest quality Canon lens, soft camera bag, extra camera cable, battery belts; also Sony VO-4800 ¾″ VTR. All excellent qual. & ready for immediate production. (212) 732-1725, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony D-6 cassette recorder modified for crystal sync by TFG. Excellent qual/cond. (w/ piggy-back adaptor/strap/case/power supply), $500. (201) 333-8695, NJ.

● *FOR SALE:* Moviola M86 6-plate flatbed w/ flickerless prism, torque control box, quick-stop feature. Fine conditon. $11,500. Yoram, (212) 496-6019, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Edison cylinder phonograph (w/ horn, 4 disks), no needle, working condition, collector's item, $300. Used 16mm 1200′ metal reels & cans, at ½ list price. (212) 749-1250, weekdays 9 to 5, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* French Eclair ACL, 12–120 Angenieux lens, 2 motors, 1 400′ mag, 1 200′ mag, battery, chgr, lens shade, filters, traveling case. Recent overhaul, $3,750. Nagra 111, crystal sync, AC adaptor, headset, cables, EV 644 super card. mic. Mint, $1,800. Also editing equipment. (212) 982-6054, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony DXC 1810 camera with Beta portapak VTR & batteries, AC power supply, cables & case. All equipment in excellent condition. $1,900. Sony SLO 383 editing Beta VTR. $1,950. Ron, (212) 697-7800, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Steenbeck, 8-plate, 2 picture head. Finley-Hill soundbox. Rent: $500–650/month. Sale: $13,000. (415) 864-6714, CA.

● *FOR SALE:* Cannon Scoopic 16mm, mint condition w/ crystal, 400′ adaptor, 2 400′ mags, extra batteries, case. $1,500 or best offer. Jack, (202) 885-2040, D.C.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony VO 4800 w/BVU modification, BP 60 battery, under 75 hrs. record time, no playback use. Mint cond., $1,950. Also EV 644 super cardioid mic, v.g., $135. 3 gang 35mm–1 gang 16mm sync, $150. Marita Simpson, (212) 982-6054, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* 35 BL11, 16 S.R., Zeiss super speed lenses, Nagra recorder, 16mm 6-plate editing table. Film Friends, 16 E. 17th St., NYC 10003, (212) 620-0084.

● *FOR SALE:* Angenieux 12–120 lens; Canon 12–120 macro lens, like new; 1200′ BL mag. Must sell. Price negotiable & very reasonable. Bill Wadsworth Prods., 2404 Rio Grande, Austin, TX 78705, (512) 478-2971.

● *FOR SALE OR RENT:* Computer motion control system for animation or optical effects. Microprocessor-controlled system incl. interface & stepping motors. Streaking effects, slit scan & repeatable moves. Priced right. Marc, (212) 689-7511, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* Locus Communications low-cost services for independent video production: multicamera pkgs., single camera units, special services for video installations, cameras, recorders & players, monitors, audio equipment & accessories. Membership: $25/yr individuals, $50/yr organizations to qualify for 40% discounts on rates. Contact: Locus Communications, 250 W. 57th St., Ste. 1229, NYC 10019, (212) 757-4220.

● *FOR SALE:* Must sell ASAP. Prefer package deal: JVC KY310 3-tube camera w/ broadcast quality boards, hardcase, 2 Nicad batteries, lights, AC adapter & new Portabrace case; Bogen fluid head tripod w/ dolly; JVC 4400U ¾″ portable recorder w/ new battery & Portabrace case; JVC CR6300U ¾″ recorder w/ tuner, audio dub & edit; JVC 6200 ½″ portable recorder w/ AC adaptor charger, batteries, audio dub & video insert; JVC 2600 ½″ portable w/tuner, battery, audio dub & video insert; Sanyo 6300 ½″ Beta recorder; Hybrid 8 special effects generator; Mindset Hi-Resolution Computer w/ dual disc drive, joy stick, mouse & software incl. Time Arts Lumena, Designer, D.O.S. & GW-BASIC; Recoton Model V615 stereo color processor; 600w lights w/ case & stands, xtra bulbs & barndoors; 1000w lights w/case & stands; air-cooled 2000/1000w lights w/ stands, filters, doors & xtra bulbs. Pkg. also incl. mics, cable, misc. connectors, cases, bags, etc. All equipment in new to excellent condition, most manuals included. Entire pkg. $10,500. Video Events, 4620 Grove, Skokie, IL 60076, (312) 677-2578.

● *FOR SALE:* Modified Auricon (crystal, takes CP battery), body only, $900. W/ lens, inquire. Bolex barney-blimp, brand new, $200. Paul Hart, 625 Division, E. Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 351-2603.

● *FOR RENT:* 2 offices in downtown NYC. High floor w/ terrace overlooking Greenwich Village and Hudson River. Private entrance. Mail accepted by main office. Excellent for editing room & production office w/ conference & screening room & copying

machine available. $750/month. Contact Louise Greaves, (212) 206-1213, NYC.

● *WANTED* Sony 1610 or 1710 Camera Control Unit w/ Sony model CMA-6. (212) 222-0724/ 925-7666, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* 16mm Auricon Super 1200 camera, TVT Shutter, Filmagnetic, 17-85 Pan Cinor lens, 1200′ mag., complete $1,095. D4 Film Studios, Inc. (617) 444-0226, MA.

● *WANTED:* Low-priced loft for ongoing experimental video shoots. Approx. 60′×60′, high ceiling, no columns, available on 24 hr. basis during shoot. (212) 719-2133, M-F, 9-5, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony 2850-A ¾″, just overhauled, $2,500 plus freight. Mike, (305) 554-7453, FL.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony VCR VO 1800 ¾″, $350. Lynitron Sharp monitor 17″, $250. Good condition. Together $500 or best offer. Guido, (212) 228-6349, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* Complete Betacam system, plus lighting and Stereo Nagra Time Code sound equipment. Call collect, (803) 538-2709, NC.

● *FOR SALE:* Eclair magazines, spare body & Angenieux Primes. Lowell Quartz D Kits (new), $699. Bell & Howell 2709 Animation Camera, 16 or 35mm, $3,800. MP 30 35mm portable projector, like new, $395. Arri, Bolex & Beaulieu accessories. Tony, (201) 659-4430, NJ.

Conferences ● Workshops

● *COMPUTER GRAPHIC ARTS 85:* Conference/seminars/exhibit sponsored by Pratt Center for Computer Graphics in Design in association with *Computer Graphics World* magazine. Dec. 8–11 at the Marriott Marquis, NYC. Key trends in equipment & technology. Contact: Perry E. Jeffe, Director, Pratt Center for Computer Graphics in Design, 9 Skyline Drive, Hawthorne, NY 10532, (914) 592-1155.

● *THE CAMERA'S INNER EYE:* Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 7, 14, 21, 1985. 3 prominent film experts will lecture on relationship of the cinema to the visual arts, literature & drama. All programs approx. 2½ hrs. long. Individual tickets sold only at door. For info, call (617) 267-9300, x306.

● *THE SPACE CHASE:* A Conference for Nonprofit Arts Organization on How To Find & Finance Administrative, Rehearsal, Exhibition & Performance Space. Sponsored by Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Dec 12–13, 1985 at New York Telephone, 1095 6th Avenue. In cooperation with the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, NYC Office of Business Development, & the Cultural Assistance Center. City planners, attorneys & theater designers will be among the panelists & workshops leaders. Registration: $125, payable to VLA; deadline: Nov. 22, 1985. VLA, 1560 Broadway, Suite 711, New York, NY 10036 (212) 575-1150.

Films ● Tapes Wanted

● *MEET THE FILMMAKER:* Series at Brooklyn College Institute for Retired Professionals & International Center in NY (foreign gov. reps & others). Your presence, short films & promotional literature will help popularize your creations. Contact Sol Rubin (charter member A1VF), Box 40, NYC 10038.

● *EDUCATIONAL MOVIES:* ½-hr. educational films wanted for distribution to high schools. Programs marketed individually to specifically targeted segments of the high school market. Especially interested in programs on industrial arts, vocational education, career guidance, home economics & science. Send program description to: Circle Oak Productions, 260 Katonah Ave., Katonah, NY 10536, (914) 232-9551.

● *FRENCH NON-THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTOR* looking for sports films, traditional & novelty: car, motocycle, bike races, American rugby & football, sled dogs, etc. Contact American rep. Ruth J. Feldman, (213) 394-2984, 1433 10th St. #7, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

● *INDEPENDENT PRODUCER SEEKS FOOTAGE* of Vietnam veterans, protests, anti-war demonstrations, speeches & actions by Ron Kovic for *Born on the Fourth of July,* 16mm documentary portrait of Vietnam vet, author, activist Ron Kovic. Contact Loretta Smith, Flower of the Dragon Productions, 3635 N. Paulina St., Chicago IL 60613, (312) 327-8592.

● *16MM STOCK FOOTAGE* available on El Salvadoran rebels, Vietnam combat, Geraldine Ferraro, Jesse Jackson, nuke issues & more. Also wanted for distribution: 16mm & S-8 footage of newsworthy events & people. Contact News on Film, Paul Hart, 65 Division, E. Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 351-2603.

● *DISTRIBUTOR* looking for independent video & films to distribute worldwide. Contact Bob McHatton at Tower Productions, 3002 Hennepin, Minneapolis, MN 55407.

● *INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION COMPANY* seeks non-exclusive distributors for instructional video, "Interview Techniques and Resume Tips for the Job Applicant." Contact: Bennu Productions, Inc., 165 Madison Ave., NY 10016, (212) 519-2727/ 213-8511.

● *WNYC TV—CHANNEL 31,* Manhattan Cable Channel 3, is looking for narrative film & video, 30 min. or less, for spring series *WNYC Mini Playhouse.* Send ¾″ preview cassettes to Acquisitions Dept., WNYC-TV. One Centre St., New York, NY 10007.

● *INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER* looking for distributor for feature independent underground films & shorts on satirical social topics, comedy, documentary & sexual politics. Contact: Cinema of Transgression, (212) 228-1896, NYC.

● *CABARET THEATRE* seeks all types of independent film & video projects of any length for presentation to public in varied program. Contact: Lynn Waltz, On Stage, Cab'ret, 2020 Sansom St., Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 567-0741.

● *W 45AB-TV,* The Inner Entertainment Channel, seeks films & videotapes for local cable TV channel. Contact: Ademah Hackshaw, W 45AB-TV, Box 1037, Kingshill, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands 00850, (809) 778-9045.

Freelancers

● *VIDEO PRODUCTION/POSTPRODUCTION SPECIALIST:* Experienced in producing, directing, shooting & editing; studio & remotes. Willing to work with you or for you. Kingsley Allison, (212) 760-7695, days; (212) 893-7986, eves, NYC.

● *MAKE UP ARTISTS/HAIRDRESSER/ WIGMASTER:* Experience in print, TV, film, stage & video. W/emphasis on period fashion (past, present & future). Estimates for design & production; portfolio, resume & reel available upon request. Freelance only. Contact Ron Lewis, (212) 242-3900, NYC.

● *COMPOSER FOR FILM:* International award winner. Classically trained, but not limited. Can score anything. Gerald Brennan, (313) 668-0016, MI.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER/EX-DANCER:* Consultation & production services for dancers, low-budget broadcast production pkg., incl. DXC M3 camera; VHS or Beta documentation of rehearsals. ¾″ editing $20/hr. Dubbing $12/hr. Penny Ward Video, (212) 228-1427/431-5282, NYC.

● *EXPERIENCED FILM SOUNDMAN:* Will work on your feature or documentary. Recordist, boom, or playback. Doug Tourtelot, (212) 489-0232, NYC.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER:* W/ 16mm pkg. available for features, shorts, commercials, docs, music videos, etc. Call to see reel(s). Cathy Zheutlin, (213) 828-2525, CA.

● *ANIMATOR:* Experienced working w/ independents, title design, character animation a specialty. Storyboards. Reasonable rates for reasonable schedules. Sample reel available. John Baumann, (212) 533-4705/254-6300, x294 or 331, NYC.

● *LOS ANGELES GAFFER/KEY GRIP:* 8 yrs experience in features, commercials, educational & industrial films. Location package available. Doug Cragoe, (818) 763-2400, CA.

● *KIND & REASONABLE MOVING COMPANY:* Production assistant w/van: $175 day. Wkly & hrly rates available. Household, airport, commercial. (212) 929-3570, NYC.

● *EXPERIENCED RESEARCHER/COORDINATOR:* For documentary or fictional projects. Award-winning track record. Joan Engel, 43 Spring St. NYC 10012, (212) 925-0403, NYC.

● *RESEARCHER/WRITER/LOCATION SCOUT:* Have worked w/ PBS documentaries, network news & special events depts & independent documentary & narrative projects. Able to read 1,000 wpm for quick backgrounds on any subject. Native New Yorker familiar w/ locations & research & production facilities in the tri-state area. Familiar w/ major cities abroad & able to consult on foreign locations. Functional French & Spanish. References available. Alyce Wittenstein, (212) 213-9047, NYC.

● *PROPOSAL DOCTORS:* Experienced producers help you get the money. (We've raised more than $1,000,000.) We'll edit, rewrite, polish your proposal, revise budgets & even give it that "professional look" w/ our word processor. Victoria or Michael, (718) 802-0002, NYC.

● *COMPUTERIZED FILM/VIDEO BUDGET PREPARATION:* Producer/director w/ Ikegami 77, excellent cond. References on request. Reasonable per diem rates. Will travel. Computerized audio-visuals & more. P. Greg Alland, (212) 420-0953, NYC.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER:* W/ complete 16mm pkg.; experienced in all types of production. Fluent French & Spanish, free to travel, reels available. Pedro Bonilla, (213) 454-8909, CA.

● *SAN FRANCISCO GAFFER AVAILABLE:* Also dolly grip & best boy on commercials, industrials, docs, features. NABET 15. In partnership

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● *CAMERA CREWS:* Film & tape, CP-16r & Nagra. Sony BVP 300 & BVU 110. Editing ENG & documentary crews available. Negotiable rates. Top credits. Ron Zimmerman, Visual Evidence, Inc., 411 Bonham-at-the-Alamo, San Antonio, TX, (512) 225-6708/299-1400.

● *ACTRESS FOR VOICEOVER WORK, TRANSLATOR:* Spanish & French. Sample tape of work done for Ministry of Education of Nicaragua. R. Pikser, (212) 222-0865, NYC.

● *PRODUCTION ACCOUNTING:* Budget planning to bill paying. 15 yrs. in major market broadcast, multi-media & print production/finance experience. Diana Dring, (415) 567-6064, CA.

● *PRODUCTIONS IN SPAIN:* Licensed production company w/ full crew available. Experienced in features, rock videos, documentaries, shorts & commercials. Absolutely low rates (our last video came in under budget of $10,000). Possibilities of co-production subsidies. Call or write Free Way Films, Calle Hortaleza, 74 Madrid 28004, Spain, Tel: 232-1136.

● *COMING OUT WEST?* NY indies planning a shoot in Northern California or the San Francisco Bay Area can save time & money by contacting AIVF member Karil Daniels to coordinate the most effective, least expensive shoot possible. Over 10 years experience working in/with the SF indie film & video community. Contacts to quality freelance crew members, locations, equipment, services & supplies, at best rates. Contact Karil Daniels, Point of View Prods., 2477 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94110, (415) 821-0435.

● *FILM SOUND STAGE:* Negotiable rates. Brian Sullivan, Midtown Studio, 35 W. 31st St., NYC 10001, (212) 564-9405.

● *WRITERS & PRODUCERS:* Seeking evaluation, sales, development deals, or top agency representation? Contact Flaming Rose Prods., 770 Princeton Ave., Metedeconk, NJ 08724, (201) 892-5552.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER AVAILABLE* w/ Sony DXC-M3A, new VO 6800, mics, lights & transportation for local, national & international industrials, docs, theater, dance, music. Negotiable rates. Video Jello, J. Maxtone-Graham, (718) 636-5590, NYC.

● *PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/WRITER:* 8 yrs. experience at *ABC News* in NYC. Also organized production of award-winning half-hour TV drama. M. Wheeler, (212) 595-5947, NYC.

● *VIDEOMAKER:* Experienced TV scripting, production & postproduction skills. Many crew & talent contacts in Chicago area. J. Brooks, (312) 761-7036; Box 1108, 6151 N. Winthrop, Chicago, IL 60640.

● *PRODUCTION HELP:* Available afternoons, evenings, weekends for work in film/video productions. Inexpensive, energetic, responsible service in exchange for more experience & contacts. Otie Brown, (212) 765-7322/210-5493 (work) NYC.

● *ORIGINAL MUSIC & LYRICS* for film & video. Composing & production, free demo. Dennis Rivellino, Media Music Productions, (914) 759-5734, NY.

● *VIDEOTAPING SERVICES:* Award-winning producers specializing in documentary reportage & arts documentation. ¾" & ½" pkgs. available, also, audio recordist with Nagra 4.2L & mics seeks in-

teresting & unusual employment. Contact: Paul Kornblueh, (212) 619-8298, NYC.

● *PRODUCTION COMPANY* available for commercial or independent projects. Full-service: from budget to shooting to showing. In-house producer, director, cinematographer, production manager, production assistants & van. Film & video. Contact: Phyllis Adams, (212) 334-9199, NYC.

● *EXPERIENCED DOCUMENTARY WRITER* with solid credentials available. I've written an award-winning doc for PBS, news features for ABC & *MacNeil/Lehrer* & educational film for National Geographic. References available. Contact: Kathy Barber Hersh, (305) 667-6779, FL.

● *FILM PACKAGING, PRESENTATIONS & PRODUCING.* Previous packages available for consideration. Reasonable prices, classy packages; short notice OK. Shootfire Films, 272 Bowery, 3rd Floor, NYC 10012. (212) 334-9199.

Opportunities ● Gigs

● *EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR* w/ successful exp. in management of large media arts or similar arts nonprofit organization. Strong track record in development, fiscal & organizational planning, community relations & outreach. Interpersonal skills essential. Salary 25–30K. Boston Film/Video Foundation, Dept. A, 1126 Boylston St., Boston MA 02215.

● *EXPERIENCED FILM EDITOR* sought for work in 1986 on 1-hour Black independent documentary *A Question of Color.* Film explores intragroup values in the Black American community: skin color, hair texture & facial features through personal interviews, archival film footage & photographs. Sensitivity to Black/white U.S. race relations extremely important. Send resume & cover letter to: Kathe Sandler, 736 West End Ave., #1B, NYC 10025.

● *INDEPENDENT FILM PRODUCER* seeks completed, contemporary, humanistic, *copyrighted,* original screenplay by credited feature scriptwriter. Submit synopsis only (it will not be returned), with professional dossier to Park Sq. Station, Box 15756, Stamford, CT 06901.

● *GAFFER WANTED:* Camera crew w/ ¾" gear looking for film gaffer interested in developing video lighting skills. Paid & spec. work. Send resume to: Imagelink Prods., 355 W. 85th St., #61, NYC 10024.

● *PRODUCER NEEDED* to put together financing for story of Mario Lanza or other singer-related stories. Voice & soundtracks available. Songs already recorded. Can obtain rights to book on Lanza's life for TV or movie. John Amato, 41 Calvert Ave., Commack, NY 11725, (516) 462-9547.

● *BTSC* seeks part-time film coordinator w/ distribution exp. Call Carl Clay at (718) 527-0836 for details, NYC.

● *FEATURE FILM CREW:* Independent production company in pre-production on feature film. Principal photography in Washington, DC., Spring 1986. Seeking 1st & 2nd asst. directors, editors, unit manager, camera & sound crews, wardrobe, grips, gaffers, special effects personnel & other crew positions. Must have solid prior experience & be willing to work non-union. Send resume or call: Chorvinsky Studios, 411 Howard Ave., Kensington, MD 20895, (301) 564-1433.

● *EDITOR* wanted to work on feature documentary about Civil War. Contact: James Agee Film Project, 155 Stribling Ave., Charlottesville, VA 22903, (804) 295-0262.

● *INDEPENDENT PRODUCER* with directing ability, experience & own equipment (35mm) wanted to shoot on location in Africa. Concept developed w/ N. America & int'l. markets in mind. Contact: Heritage, Box 46, Syracuse, NY 13201. (315) 472-7498.

● *PART-TIME SALES REP* wanted to develop industry clientele for film & video services. Salary plus commission. R. Lawson. Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10003. (212) 673-9361.

● *VIDEO PROFESSIONAL CREW* needed for Robert Monticello's fall NY hunger benefit. Also, crew needed to travel to Sudan/Ethiopia in winter for docudrama. Paid positions. Mail resume to Robert Monticello Prods., Box 372, New York, NY 10014.

● *SCRIPTWRITERS* invited to enter the first annual Great Western Teleplay Competition. Submit script of 60 or 90 mins. written for or adaptable to TV. Must exemplify the spirit of the American West, past or present. Winner receives $10,000 & will work w/ The Denver Center & *American Playhouse* for possible inclusion in the PBS *American Playhouse* series. Scripts accepted until Jan. 1, 1986. Great Western Teleplay Competition, Box 8446, New Haven, CT 06530.

● *PART-TIME INSTRUCTORS NEEDED.* Spring & summer sessions. 16mm Film Production, Documentary Video, Directors Project, Color Video Cameras, Screenwriting & Video Basics Production. Salary commensurate w/ experience. Send resume, cover letter to: Kim Ingraham, Media Training Coordinator, Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.

● *VIDEO ARTISTS* needed for guest lecturers. Promote yourself & your work through screenings & discussions. Contact: Dona Nada Claudio, Chelsea Hotel #223, 222 W. 23rd St., NYC. Evenings (212) 243-3700, x223.

Postproduction

● *¾" EDITING/POSTPRODUCTION:* Left & independent documentaries our first love. Sony 5850 system, SMPTE time code, Microgen character generator, full sound mix, Ikegami & JVC cameras, Sony BVU 110 & 4800 decks. Post is $40/hr. w/ editor. 10% discount to AIVF members. Debbie or David, 29th Street Video, (212) 594-7530, NYC.

● *BEST BETACAM DEAL:* Production services, dubs, off-line editing. VTA, ARTS. (212) 255-1809, NYC.

● *NEGATIVE MATCHING:* 16mm, Super-16, 35mm cut for regular printing, blowup, or video transfer. Clean work at reasonable rates. One White Glove, Tim Brennan, (718) 897-4145, NYC.

● *16MM NEGATIVE MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut at reasonable rates. Bruce, (212) 228-7352, NYC.

● *FILM TITLE SERVICES:* Camera-ready art &/or shooting of titles. Many typefaces, design consultation, crawls. Reasonable rates, fast service. (212) 460-8921, NYC.

● *16MM EDITING & POSTPRODUCTION:* In sunny Oakland. 6-plate Euro-flatbed, 2 fully equipped benches & motorized sync; adjacent transfers, projection, narration recording & free parking. 24

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● *¾" EDITING:* JVC 8250 w/ convergence controller, microgen character generator, $20/hr. Discounts for long-term projects. On Track Video, (212) 864-5166, NYC.

● *VHS EDITING:* ¾" sophistication audio equalization & mixing. Hi-speed search. Professional quality. Doug Ingber, (212) 923-4789, NYC.

● *TEXAS FILM & VIDEO EDITING:* 6-plate Moviola in comfortable cutting room w/ phone, fridge, sound transfers. Sony BVU-800 off-line & on-line editing. Affordable rates. Ron Zimmerman, Visual Evidence Inc., 411 Bonham-at-the-Alamo, San Antonio, TX, (512) 225-6708/299-1400.



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● *FILM-TO-TAPE:* 8mm to S-8 to tape, custom care for your originals & outstanding transfer quality; mastered to ¾" or ½" w/ non-synchronous or post-synch audio available. Audio recordings w/ Nagra 4.2L & mics for interesting & unusual employment. Videotaping services from Amalgam Prods.; award-winning producers specializing in documentary reportage & arts documentation, w/ ¾" & ½" available. Paul Kornblueh, (212) 691-8298, NYC.

● *POSTPRODUCTION CONSULTING & EDITING* for all aspects of 16mm & 35mm film. Experienced in solving problems, archival footage, film-to-tape transfer, etc. Credits include postproduction supervisor PBS series, technical consultation to film archives, editor of productions using archival material. Steve, (718) 624-4142, NYC.

● *EDITING FACILITIES:* Sony 5850-RM440 4 track audio. New equipment. Any hrs. VHS Dubs. $30–40/hr. Mike, (305) 554-7435.

● *EDITING FACILITIES:* ¾" video editing for daily, weekly or project basis. (212) 966-6326, NYC.

● *NEG MATCHING:* 16mm, 35mm. Clean, accurate. Andre, Coda Film (212) 265-1191, NYC.

Publications

● *BEFORE YOU SHOOT:* A Guide to Low Budget Film Production. Manual for producers & production managers. Covers feature & shorter films; includes scheduling, budgeting, casting, locations, postproduction, etc. Send $11 ppd, to Shire Films, Pox 1728, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

● *COPYRIGHT AND YOU,* a primer on copyright & fair use issues for users of local channels, clarifies the legal rights of program producers. *Copyright and You* was prepared for Media General Cable in Fairfax, VA by the National Federation of Local Cable Programers in conjunction with Ernest Sanchez of the law firm of Arter & Hadden. Send $4 per copy ($3.50 for 11–50 copies; $3.00 for over 50 copies) to NFLCP, 906 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, DC, (202) 544-7272.

● *HUMAN RIGHTS FILM GUIDE,* an extensive guide to films & videotapes dealing with subjects of human rights themes as defined by the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights, identifies, describes & provides rental or purchase sources for more than 400 films & videotapes. Films & videotapes listed by subject areas & cross-indexed by title, country & geographic region. Send $7.50 ppd. ($6.95 cover price) to Facets Multimedia, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614.

● *MEDIA NETWORK* announces the publication of two new guides: *Guide to Films on Apartheid,* an evaluative directory of 45 of the best films on apartheid, with a special section on the southern African region & *Guide to Community Media,* a directory of nearly 50 films, videotapes & slide shows on issues like housing, crime & race relations. Each guide is available for $2 plus 50¢ postage each (discounts for bulk orders) from Media Network, 208 W. 13th St., New York, NY 10011, (212) 620-0877.

Resources ● Funds

● *FUNDING FOR VIDEO EXHIBITION: Through the Looking Glass,* a 2-hr. program of artists' video curated by Robin White for the NYS Museum in Albany, presents a range of video styles & approaches from 15 artists, incl. Richard Serra Dara Birnbaum, Dan Reeves, Peter Campus, Nam June Paik & William Wegman. 60% rental subsidy for program is available to New York State nonprofit organizations. Contact Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NYC 10019, (212) 560-2919.

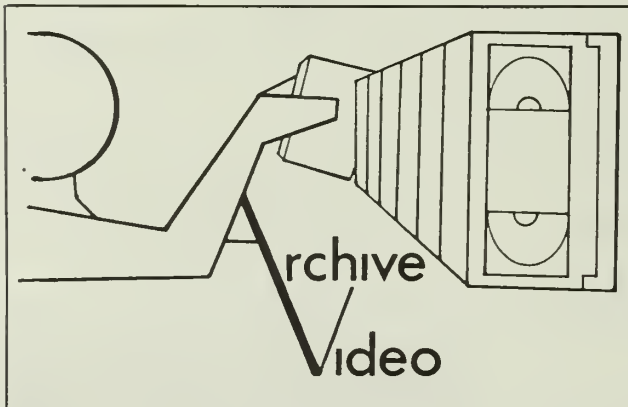
● *NEA CHALLENGE GRANT* program has changed its application deadline from mid-January to Dec. 12, 1985. Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply will be November 5, 1985. Challenge Grant Program, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC. 20506, (202) 682-5436.

● *MORE NEA DEADLINES:* Film/Video Production, Nov. 15, 1985; Dec. 2, 1985 (Services to the Field); Folk Arts Organizations & Apprenticeships (Individuals), Letter of Intent by Nov. 15, 1985, application deadline Jan. 9, 1986. NEA, 1110 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Washington, DC. 20506, (202) 682-5436.

● *DOCTORS FOR ARTISTS:* A nonprofit doctor referral service to aid performing & visual artists. Offers artists 20% discount on medical services incl. office visits & surgery. Doctors for Artists, 123 W. 79th St., NYC 10024, (212) 496-5172. Referral operator: M–F, 10am–6pm.

● *PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY:* Individual & group counselling to independent artists & freelancers. Highly trained w/years of experience. Specializes in problems of interpersonal relationships, artistic careers, rearing of young children. Reduced rates for AIVF members. Judith Smith, CSW, (212) 691-6695, NYC.

● *1985 WHITNEY BIENNIAL FILM/VIDEO EXHIBITION* together w/ the American Federation of Arts, now offers film & video components of the 1985 Biennial, a survey of contemporary art consisting of films & videotapes produced during the previous 2 years. The 31 pieces are offered separately or together & include works from Lizzie Borden, Larry Gottheim, Ericka Beckman, Lynne Tillman, *et al.* The exhibition will continue to tour & will reach



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● *INTERNATIONAL INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS SOCIETY* now has a New York chapter. IICS, founded in 1982, provides a forum for the exchange of ideas & information promoting the use of interactive media. Organization activities incl. workshops, special events, programs, an on-line electronic bulletin board & newsletter. Membership: individuals, $50; students, $25; corporate, $500. IICS, c/o Video Management, Inc., 565 Fifth Ave., NYC 10017.

● *KROWN INC.* works w/ American corporations, production companies & movie studios to feature corporate brand identification in feature motion pictures & TV productions & create effective marketing tie-in promotions. Krown offers the independent producer the chance to reduce expenses by supplying products, locations, set dressings, etc., as well as arranging tie-in promotions between the product & the film. Contact Krown Inc., 8484 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 235, Beverly Hills, CA 90211, (213) 658-8771.

● *THIRD WORLD PRODUCERS PROJECT:* The Film News Now Foundation provides 1-on-1 consultations in all aspects of fundraising, development, production, postproduction, exhibition & distribution for Third World, social issue & women's media producers. Also offers limited fiscal sponsorships. Send proposals or call Renee Tajima or Christine Choy, Film News Now, 335 W. 38th St., NYC, (212) 947-9277.

Trims ● Glitches

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to AIVF member Gary Krauss, who received a New Jersey State Council of the Arts media fellowship grant for his documentary *Brooklyn's Electric Boogie.*

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Janet Jaller Weiss, producer of two public service TV shorts about the UN Decade for Women Conference. The spots were shown on Channel 4, Channel 11, and the NBC network.

● *KUDOS* to AIVF member Jacqueline Shearer, recipient of a $16,991 grants from the New York Council for the Humanities for her full-length dramatic film *Addie and the Pink Carnations.*

● *BEST OF LUCK* to Gorman Bechard, who was nominated for 6 Laurel Awards given by Laurel Cablevision in Litchfield County, CT.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to the following recipients of the 1985 Film in the Cities Regional Film/Video Grants: L. Wade Black, Helen DeMichiel, Scott Dodds, Ken Feingold, Ann Follett, James Gambone, Ruth Anne Godollei, J.J. Murphy, Leighton Pierce, Roger Schmitz, Geoff Seelinger, Melanie Sherwood, Deborah Wallwork, Steve Westerlund & Joanna Winship.

● *PLEASE NOTE:* Johanna Heer at HEP Pictures, 246 Mott St., New York, NY 10012, is the sole authorized agent for rentals, sales, or loans of prints or tapes of the film *Subway Riders.*

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How To Prepare Budgets for Film & Video
by Michael Wiese, $14.95

Motion Picture, TV & Theatre Directory
Motion Picture Enterprises, $5.95

Independent Feature Film Production
by Gregory Goodell, $7.95

Beyond Video: Media Alliance Directory I
Media Alliance, $2.50

Film & Video Service Profiles
Center for Arts Information
$5.00 (film), $6.75 (video)

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NOTA BENE

The Independent's Notices are undergoing renovations. Over the past few years this section of the magazine has expanded as our membership has grown. Because of the increased length and the accompanying increases in production costs for the magazine, we have decided to institute several changes that will make the column more practical and help offset the expenses. Beginning with this issue, the section titled "Editing Facilities" has been renamed "Postproduction." All notices related to editing, negative matching, sound transfers, and other postproduction services will appear in this section. Preproduction, production, and other film and videomaking services will be listed under "Freelancers."

In the March 1986 issue we will divide the Notices into two categories: Classifieds and Notices. The new Classifieds column will include all listings now appearing under the "Buy•Rent•Sell," "Freelancers," and "Postproduction" headings. There will be a $15 charge and 250 character limit for each entry for one issue. Listings in these sections will be restricted to members only. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion and indicate the number of issues on the submitted copy. Each classified must be typed, double-spaced, and worded exactly as it should appear. Remember the 250 character restriction (approximately 5 lines). All submissions must be accompanied by a check or money order—no cash, please. And no classifieds will be accepted by telephone.

Deadlines for Notices and Classifieds will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, two months prior to the cover date of the issue., e.g., November 8 for the January/February issue. Members should keep in mind the dates of our double issues: January/February and August/September. Mail classifieds to: Independent Classifieds, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

DOCUMENTARY FILM WEEK

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Valley Filmworks presents a week-long festival, exploration and celebration of documentary films and filmmakers.

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A non-profit corporation dedicated to the cause of documentary filmmakers.

Underwriting for the Festival is provided by Valley Filmworks, Inc. It is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts. Additional funding provided by American Broadcast Companies, American Express Foundation, Benton Foundation, The Equitable, Exxon Corporation, the George Gund Foundation, and the Samuel Newhouse Foundation.

Thurs., Nov. 7	Fri., Nov. 8	Sat., Nov. 9	Sun., Nov. 10	Mon., Nov. 11	Tues., Nov. 12	Wed., Nov. 13
2:00 **Native Land** (1942) Leo Hurwitz IN PERSON	*2:00* **Huie's Sermon** (1980) Werner Herzog **Portrait of an American Zealot** (1982) Marc & Alan Levin	*2:00* **Seventeen** (1982) J. DeMott & J. Kreines	*2:00* **Tosca's Kiss** (1984) Daniel Schmid	*1:00* **Let There Be Light** (1946) John Huston **How Far Home** (1983) Bestor Cram IN PERSON	*2:00* **SL-1** (1984) D. Orr & C.L. Roberts **The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes** (1971) Stan Brakhage	*2:00* **Cortile Cascino** (1961) Robert Young **La Operacion** (1982) Ana Maria Garcia
4:00 **Come Back Africa** (1959) Lionel Rogosin	*4:00* **The Great Spirit Within the Hole** (1983) Chris Spotted Eagle	*4:15* **Ave Maria** (1985) PREMIERE Marta Mezaros IN PERSON **Abortion: Stories from North and South** (1985) Gail Singer	*3:45* **San Soleil** (1982) Chris Marker	*2:50* **Soldier Girls** (1981) Broomfield & Churchill IN PERSON	*3:45* **He Stands in a Desert Counting the Seconds of His Life** (1985) Jonas Mekas IN PERSON	*4:10* **Bombay: Our City** (1985) Anand Patwrdhan
6:00 **Salesman** (1968) Albert & David Maysles IN PERSON	*6:15* **Moana** (1926) Robert Flaherty IN PERSON: Monica Flaherty	*6:30* **Company** (1970) Plus shorts D.A. Pennebaker IN PERSON	*5:45* **Lulu in Berlin** (1984) Plus short Richard Leacock IN PERSON	*5:00* **In the Year of the Pig** (1969) Emile de Antonio IN PERSON	*6:00* **Mooney vs. Fowle** (1961) Plus short Robert Drew IN PERSON	*6:15* **Waiting for Fidel** (1974) Michael Rubbo IN PERSON
8:15 **Racetrack** (1985) PREMIERE Frederick Wiseman IN PERSON	*8:30* **At the Edge of the Union** (1985) PREMIERE Paul Hamann IN PERSON	*8:30* **God's Country** (1985) WORLD PREMIERE Louis Malle IN PERSON	*7:45* **The Murder of Fred Hampton** (1971) Mike Gray IN PERSON	*7:15* **The Trial*** (1984) PREMIERE E. Fechner IN PERSON	*7:45* **66 Scenes in America** (1982) PREMIERE **Pelota** (1984) Jorgen Leth IN PERSON	*8:00* **Nino Fidencio** (1982) Nicholas Echevarria IN PERSON
10:30 To be announced	*10:15* **Me and My Brother** (1965) Robert Frank	*10:45* **Garlic is as Good as Ten Mothers** Plus shorts Les Blank IN PERSON	*10:00* **The Gospel According to Al Green** (1984) Robert Mugge AL GREEN & ROBT. MUGGE IN PERSON	*9:30* **What are Pina Bausch and Her Dancers Doing in Wuppertal?*** (1983) K. Wildenhahn *Co-sponsored by Goethe House	*10:00* **What Sex Am I?** (1985) Lee Grant	*10:00* **Room 666** (1982) **Reverse Angle** (1982) Wim Wenders **Filmmaker: A Diary by George Lucas** (1968–1982) George Lucas

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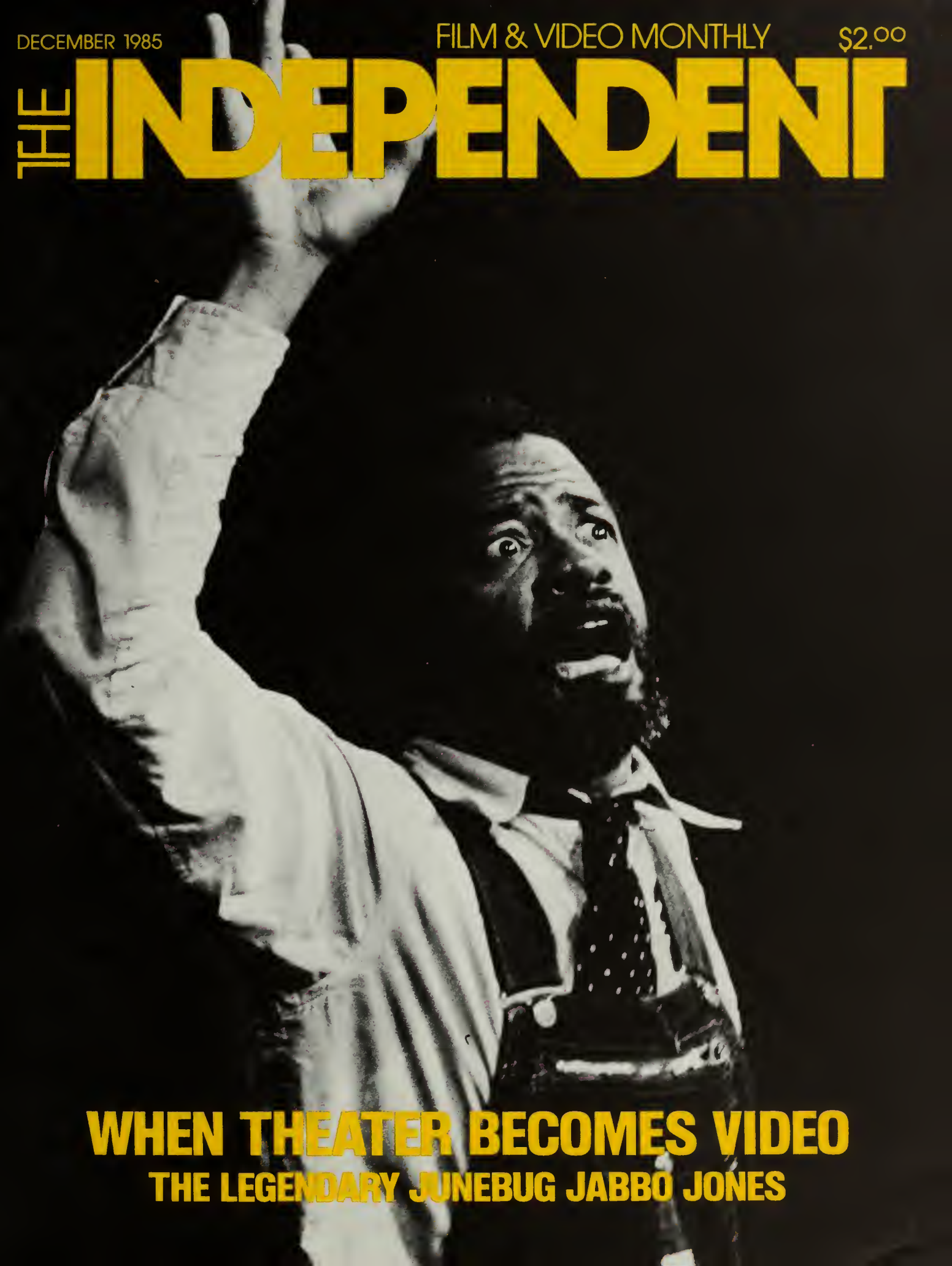
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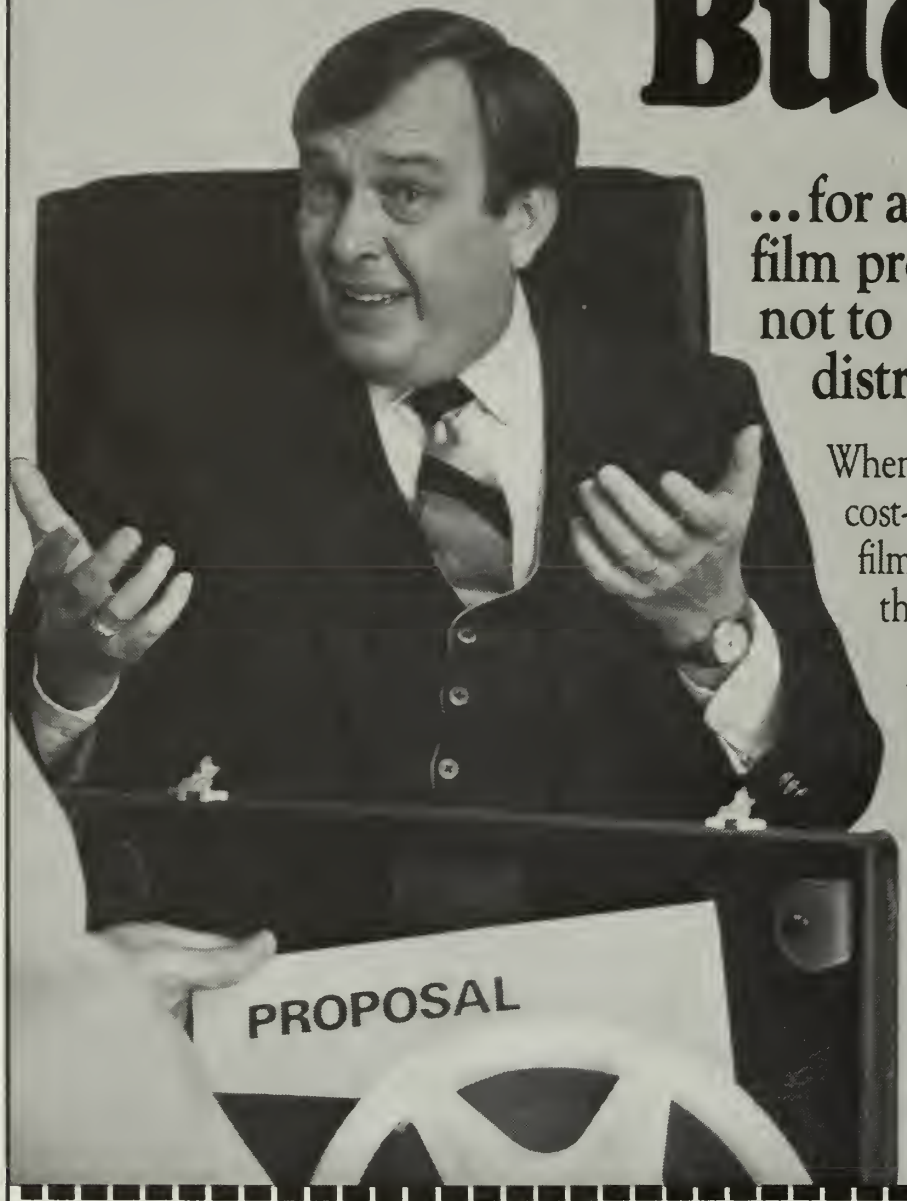
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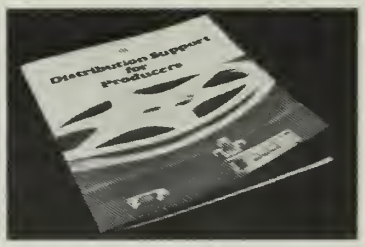
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THE INDEPENDENT

DECEMBER 1985
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 10

Publisher: Lowrence Sapadin
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Marianette, Inc.
(718-773-9869)
Distributor: Bernhard DeBoer
113 E. Center St.,
Nutley NJ 07110
Typesetting: Skeeza Typogrophy
Printer: PetCap Press

The Independent is published ten times yearly by the Faundation far Independent Video and Film, Inc. (FIVF), 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New Yark, NY 10012, (212-473-3400), a not-far-profit, tox-exempt educational foundation dedicated to the promotion of video and film, and by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc. (AIVF), the national trade associotion of independent producers and individuals invalved in independent video and film. Subscriptian is included with membership in AIVF. Together, FIVF and AIVF pravide o broad range of educatianal and prafessianal services for independents ond the general public. Publicotion af **The Independent** is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Cauncil on the Arts ond the National Endawment far the Arts, a federol agency.

The Independent welcames unsolicited manuscripts. Manuscripts connot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelape is included. Na responsibility is assumed far loss or damage.

Letters ta **The Independent** should be addressed to the editor. Letters may be edited for length.

All contents ore capyright af the Foundatian far Independent Video and Film, Inc., except where atherwise noted. Reprints require written permissian ond acknowledgement af the article's previous appearance in **The Independent.** ISSN 0731-5198.

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COVER: Writer/octar Jahn O'Neol partrays everyman Junebug Jabba Janes, whase stories celebrate the victory of wit and resaurcefulness aver outhority. In his onalysis, Mark Lussier traces Junebug's transformations from falk hero af Black sauthern arol tradition, ta stageplay, ta videa. Phato: Matt Anderson.

DOCUDRAMA

To the editor:

In the September 1985 issue of *The Independent,* Patricia Thomson argues that "the activities of transnational corporation are not" selected as topics of investigative documentaries for television. She adds that there are some independently made programs that may relate to this and other international subjects, but they "are tucked away in off-hours on PBS, not made specifically for broadcast."

She is not entirely correct. Page 34 of the same issue of *The Independent* describes *Hungry for Profit,* a film about transnational corporations involved in agribusiness in the Third World. That investigative documentary, which I made, was specifically for broadcast and it was in the PBS prime-time "core schedule" this past June. Not every public TV station chose to air it in prime-time, but virtually all aired it.

Also, I've made at least three others in recent years, as an independent and for PBS prime-time airing, on other transnational corporate activities. *For Export Only: Pesticides and Pills* won several investigative journalism and film festival awards and contributed to adoption by the United Nations of a clearinghouse to try to cope with the dumping of banned products in the Third World. *What Price Clean Air?* was a national Emmy finalist for investigative documentaries, and examined both domestic and international dimensions of acid rain.

Thomson's point is well taken that very few of these kinds of public affairs documentaries are produced by the commercial networks, which have virtually succumbed to the ratings game, concluding that one-hour documentaries that only get 20 million viewers are not enough to get fat ad fees. But her research is incomplete and just plain wrong about what at least some independent producers have been doing for prime-time PBS telecasts on subjects of global importance.

—*Robert Richter*
New York City

Patricia Thomson replies:

Robert Richter's response seems based on a misreading of my meaning. He has chosen to argue with statements not made. In the first case, when writing of *network* television's selection of topics, I ask, "Why, for instance, are U.S. national security, drug traffic, and oil prices and supplies high priority while the activities of transnational corporations are not?" This is an observation about *priorities,* not absolutes. In fact, I cite specific examples of network documentaries that have investigated transnational corporations (NBC's *Migrant* and CBS's *Daisy Chain*).

Richter also omits a qualifying phrase when quoting my sentence, "*Most often,* these [television documentaries that break from network norms] are tucked away in off-hours on PBS, not made specifically for broadcast—and are independently produced." I maintain that *most* independent documentaries on broadcast television are not given prime-time slots or sufficient promotion. Witness the two series mentioned in the article: WNET's *Independent Focus,* scheduled on Sunday at 11 p.m., and KCET's *Presente,* aired at 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays (this program is variously rescheduled by affiliates, e.g., at 12:30 p.m. on Thursdays by WNET). Despite Richter's experience, prime-time continues to be the exception, not the rule.

Finally, I clearly specify in the same paragraph that this is a case study of several network and independent productions on Central America and the Caribbean, not a comprehensive survey. The suggestion that my reearch was "incomplete and just plain wrong" because I did not mention Richter's documentaries misconstrues the article's scope and intent.

INSIDE INCINE

To the editor:

I have read DeeDee Halleck's article "Notes on Nicaraguan Media: Video Libre o Morir" [November 1984] in which there are several factual errors regarding the Nicaraguan Institute of Film (INCINE). We are aware of the serious nature of your publication and are conscious of the fact that these errors are not a result of your magazine's policies but, rather, are due to the lack of serious research on the part of the author of the article. With this in mind, I would like to make the following clarifications regarding the incorrect information in the article:

1. Noel Rivera entered INCINE in 1982 as an assistant soundman and did not participate in the teams filming during the liberation war of 1979.

2. INCINE does not pay for its documentaries to be exhibited in commercial theaters (although 80 percent of the movie theaters in Nicaragua are privately owned), due to legislation which protects and promotes national cinema. INCINE shows its films in commercial theaters, through the Mobile Cinema program and on the Sandinista Television System (SSTV) and has never had to pay for this service.

3. The Cinemateca of Nicaragua fulfills the dual function of conserving Nicaraguan national cinematographic patrimony as well as introducing new cinema into Nicaragua. To date it has held film series of Spanish, French, German, Soviet, U.S.A., Czech, Brazilian, and Mexican films, as well as films from many other courtries. After four years of hard work, under enormous limitations, the Cinemateca of Nicaragua has become a member of the International Federation of Film Archives in recognition of its efforts and achievements.

4. In response to the statement that INCINE is a family affair, I would like to point out that Rossana Lacayo, one of our film directors, does not have, nor has ever had, a brother or a sister working at INCINE, nor do any of INCINE's directors or administrators have sisters, brothers, wives, or husbands working within the Institute.

5. INCINE has not produced, nor is involved in producing, film versions of Latin American novels, with the exception of one coproduction with France, *El Senor Presidente.* INCINE produces documentaries covering the reality of contemporary Nicaragua and medium-length fiction films based on scripts and stories written by Nicaraguan writers.

6. In reference to the pressures and limitations experienced by INCINE, I would like to indicate that we are working to establish a national cinema which reflects our cultural identity and the character of our revolution, and its development is based primarily on our own initiative and skills. We have experienced many difficulties in this process; however the 70 documentaries, four medium-length fiction films, our animation workshop, and more than 20 international prizes are witness to our efforts and organization. In addition, INCINE manages a chain of more than 25 movie theaters, and through its Mobile Cinema Program takes films to even the remotest areas of the country, reaching more than 1,500,000 viewers each year. INCINE also runs a commercial distribution company, ENIDIEC, which has imported films from all over the world that were previously unknown in Nicaragua.

7. The information regarding the workshops in which the Common Sense Foundation participated was also factually incorrect; the workshops held covered the areas of film directing, camera techniques, and script writing, as well as lighting. And, indeed, INCINE has more than one light circuit, as one would suspect would be necesssary for any kind of film production.

8. Lastly, we would like to clarify that the 35mm camera which Halleck listed does not reflect the true needs of INCINE, but rather we are in urgent need of spare parts for projecting, editing, and camera equipment. We suggest that people who want to make donations or who are interested in more information about INCINE establish contact with us directly.

I'm aware that this is arriving to you quite late, due to the fact that I only now received a copy of the article. I feel that the object of this article's treatment was to damage relations of solidarity and assistance with INCINE. I ask that in one of your future issues you publish an article about INCINE and our video production. Meanwhile, I'm enclosing a catalogue that lists our films and provides a short description of each. I look forward to hearing from you and establishing more direct relations with *The Independent.*

—*Ramiro Lacayo Deshon*
Director General, INCINE
Managua, Nicaragua

DeeDee Halleck replies:

I am glad that INCINE has corrected any misinformation in my article. My purpose in writing was to stimulate solidarity and exchange between U.S. producers and their Nicaraguan counterparts. This kind of dialogue contributes to our shared task of correcting the often-distorted information we get in this country about Nicaragua.

Before publication, my article was read by several people who are closely connected with Nicaraguan media, including past participants in INCINE. While in Nicaragua, I tried to meet with *responsables* at INCINE and went to their offices three times for scheduled appointments, only to be told that a

meeting was impossible. The Common Sense workshops were in session at that time, and there was a great deal of activity that seemed to make interviews impossible. In fact, the only official interview I was granted lasted five minutes with Rudolfo Alegria Lopez and three minutes with Rosanna Lacayo. However, I spent several hours talking with Noel Rivera, who was able to come to my *hospitaje* for an interview. We also had lunch together after my brief appointment with Rosanna Lacayo. Noel talked with great enthusiasm about his sound work during the insurrection. Perhaps he was helping an internationalist crew, and not the INCINE insurgents. In any case, I distinctly understood that that was how he became involved with INCINE. I have no documentation of his official status with INCINE, either then or now, but relied on his description of his work. Had I been able to spend more time with a *responsable* perhaps I could have verified Noel's account.

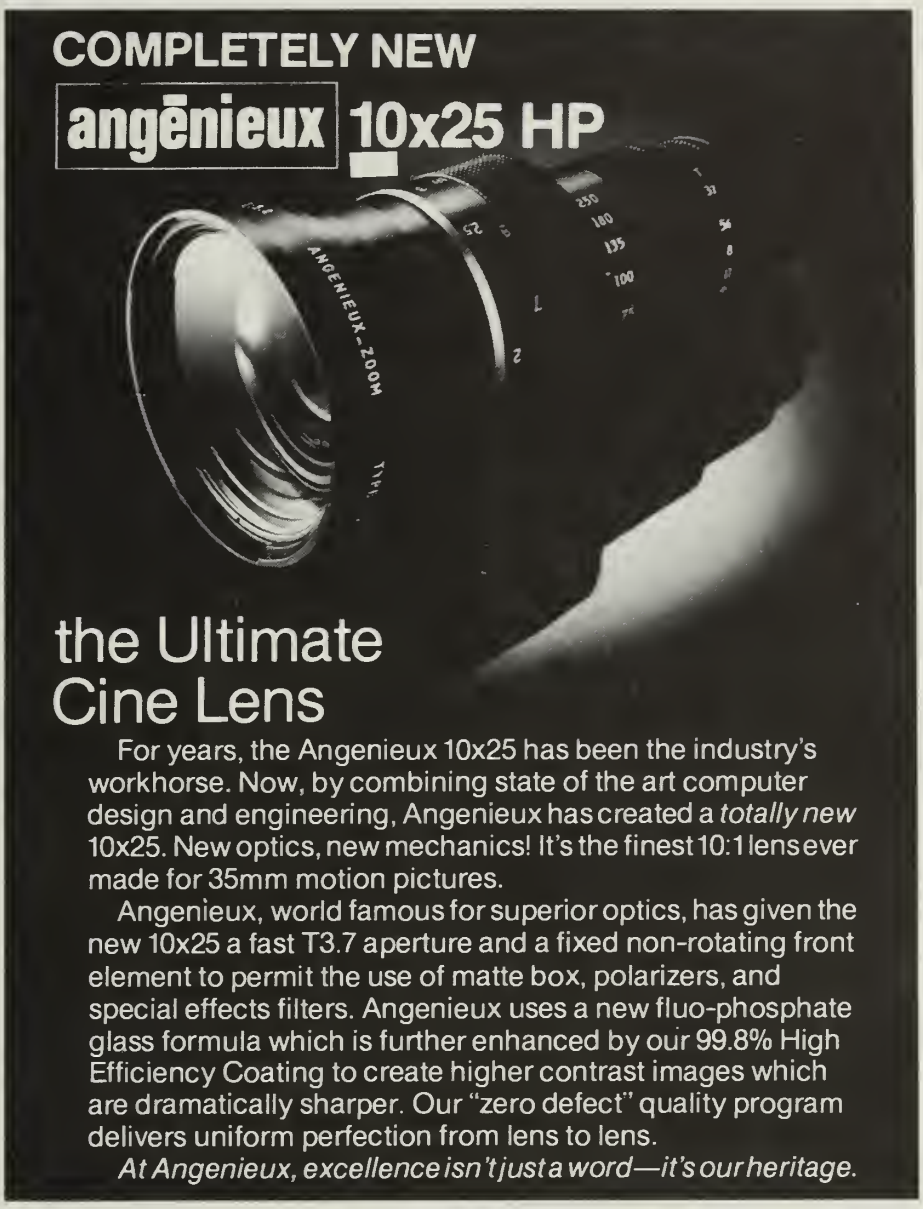
In addition, I could have asked Rosanna directly about her relationship to the other Lacayos on the INCINE staff. Instead, I relied on information given by other Nicaraguans who, however misinformed, seem firmly convinced that all the Lacayos at INCINE are from the same family. As I stated, "some have accused [INCINE] of being a family affair." That is the prevailing impression among Nicaraguans and *internationalistas* involved in cultural activities in Managua. If that is not an accurate impression, perhaps INCINE needs to correct it.

More to the point, my article was primarily about production, and most of the information was gleaned from first-hand interviews with video producers. I didn't cover details of film production and only mentioned movie theaters in order to explain the relations between producing collectives and exhibitors, a problem that has been and continues to be a concern shared by independents in the U.S. I was told by at least three sources, including a past staff member of INCINE, that private theaters exact a fee for showing INCINE films. If this is not the case, I am glad, as these important documentary shorts deserve to be seen widely by Nicaraguan audiences. Moreover, legislation guaranteeing their projection is the kind of thing we in AIVF have tried to achieve in this country with "protectionist" legislation for public broadcasting. But the main theme that I was trying to weave into the discussion was the evidence of pluralism and a mixed economy in Nicaragua. Most of the theaters there are privately owned, and they are not necessarily enthusiastic about showing INCINE films—a situation that independent producers here can readily understand.

In describing INCINE's fiction films, I meant to say that the kinds of stories INCINE is dramatizing are in the tradition of Latin American *Art.* Certainly many Nicaraguan novels and short stories are in that tradition.

The reference to only one electrical outlet available for the Common Sense workshops was probably an exaggeration, meant to highlight what I had learned. One of the North American workshop leaders I spoke to said that the lighting kits they brought were much too cumbersome and heavy-duty for the circuits at the workshop buildings. The point was not to focus on this or that detail, but to emphasize that the training and assistance we sometimes proffer is not always appropriate given the situation. The concept of "appropriate technology" is often forgotten in the quest for "professionalism." My own work constantly renounces technological solutions. My interest in simple, direct, low-cost video techniques is what intrigued me about the video work being done in Nicaragua by the Taller Popular Timoteo Valasquez and Communicaciones Midinra. This does not mean that Nicaraguans should be making *Paper Tiger* shows (low-budget, rough-hewn public access TV programs). This does not mean that I do not admire the more ambitious and spectacular work that has been achieved by INCINE since the revolution.

During this period of economic crisis in Nicaragua—caused by the contra war and Reagan's boycott—we in the U.S. need to increase our material support for INCINE's work. A detailed list of equipment and parts will be useful for solidarity work. (The 35mm camera request that I mention in my article came from my notes from an interview with Rudolfo Alegria.) I did, by the way, send three copies of the November 1984 *Independent* to Rosanna Lacayo at INCINE within two weeks of its publication. But I am grateful for INCINE's attention to this matter, even at this late date. This exchange only underlines the need for U.S. producers to visit Nicaragua, and to experience first-hand the courageous and dynamic media work being done throughout that embattled and inspirational country. *Hasta la nueva victoria.*



ON THE OFFENSIVE: CONGRESSIONAL CRITICS OF THE NEA

> If it were possible to show examples of the output of these artist politicos, I am sure most of you would agree that they are the enemies of true art, instead of artists... Through the aid of Marxist evaluators in the cultural sphere, leftists in art are attempting to break down the standard to which artists of the past adhered—to be worthy of the calling of art.*

Thus argued George Dondero, conservative Republican from Michigan, speaking before Congress in 1949. Dondero joined other red-baiters who blocked any federal funding for art in the forties, fifties, and early sixties. Aware of these kinds of maneuvers, those who drafted the legislation establishing the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities in 1965 attempted to shield these agencies from politicking by placing authority for appointing their chairs and advisory councils under the executive branch. That may have been a naive decision. Nevertheless, Congress wields no power in the realms of art and humanities, save in two instances: appropriation and authorization. This year witnessed the first concerted efforts on the part of congressional representatives to impose a right-wing social agenda on both processes.

Last spring, as the House Interior Appropriations subcomittee began its annual review of the NEA budget, two freshmen Republicans from Texas, Representative Tom Delay and Representative Richard Armey, resurrected examples of what they called "pornographic poetry," written by past NEA fellowship recipients. The poems, which Armey claimed "seven virile, young men" sitting in his office could not read aloud, were first exposed in the pages of the Spring 1982 *Policy Review,* published by the conservative Heritage Foundation. According to a report in the American Council for the Arts bulletin, this protest prompted the subcommittee to recommend a freeze, rather than an increase in the FY 86 NEA appropriation. DeLay and Armey, however, were gunning for a cut. Disappointed, they postponed their attack, planning an ambush during reauthorization hearings (reauthorization entails legislation enabling agencies to operate). And they stockpiled more ammunition.

Ana Steele, associate deputy director for programs and program coordination at the NEA, explained that aides from DeLay's office visited NEA headquarters last July, scrutinizing records of 1984 grants. Apparently they were guided by a report in the *Washington Post* written by *New Art Examiner* columnist Niki Coleman, accusing the NEA of fostering conflicts of interest in the panel review process. The major offense cited was the Kitchen and its former director Mary MacArthur. DeLay's staffers also cross-referenced Media Arts production grant recipient Skip Blumberg and Media Arts panelist Skip Blumberg. And in the pages of the Summer 1984 *Policy Review,* they read about *Possibly in Michigan,* Cecilia Condit's NEA-supported videotape "exploring the lurking fear of violence, cannibalism, and contemporary phobias in the minds of two women." DeLay's agents confirmed Condit's Media Arts production grant. The Gay Sunshine Press, too, was fingered as a recipient of a $15,000 grant from the Literature Program.

By the time Delay had gathered his evidence, the press had picked up the "pornographic poetry" story. DeLay aide Allan Binder blames papers like the *New York Times* for highlighting obscenity issues, not economics or management practices at the NEA, but this seems curious when DeLay held a press conference in July, ridiculing the agency's funding of projects like Condit's tape, reading two-line descriptions from the NEA's annual report. Some congressional colleagues and prominent intellectuals publically refuted the Armey-DeLay accusations, warning against efforts to legislate propriety. In any case, Binder recently stated, "It's not one of our priorities. We thought it would facilitate getting the budget down." Was the pornography argument, so vociferously expounded, only a cynical move? "No," he replied, "we shouldn't be giving money to fund this kind of work." What kind of work? "Anything you can't read on the floor of the House, read in in the newspapers, or see on the six o'clock news—on the public airwaves. Anything against the public norms and standards." In his formula, private businesses—newspapers and television networks—now govern criteria for public standards.

But at the reauthorization hearings, held by the House Select Education subcommittee in September, DeLay did indeed trot out his examples of offensive art. He named *Possibly in Michigan,* the Gay Sunshine Press, Barbara Broughel's videotape *Lesson II: The Frigid Heiress,* and the New York Film Festival for exhibiting Jean-Luc Godard's *Hail Mary.* Around the same time, the Christian Broadcasting Network produced a report criticizing federal arts funding, using *Possibly in Michigan* (without the soundtrack) to illustrate their point.

Still, as Binder asserted, DeLay and Armey's most serious charges against the NEA at the reauthorization hearings centered on "cronyism." They succeeded in influencing a bill that would reduce the agency's reauthorization period to two years, as opposed to the four year period now in effect. The bill would require the NEA chairperson to review products funded, ascertaining that products match proposals. It would forbid individual artists from sitting on a panel considering that artist's proposal.

In response, Steele noted that the congressional criticisms, while considered significant, did not seem to hold. The total funding for the Kitchen in 1984 was $340,000—not an unusual amount. What may have seemed extraordinary was that the figure represented the sum of 16 grants, compared to one for another major arts institution. Nor was MacArthur's participation in violation of NEA conflict of interest rules, as written in 1984, or in the pending House bill; she sat on two panels, one months after resigning as the Kitchen's director. Blumberg, Steele pointed out, received his production grant in May 1984 and served on a panel reviewing media arts organizations in August 1984. Although no conflict seems apparent, this *was* a transgression of NEA rules, which are "tougher on individual artists than representatives of arts organizations," as Steele put it, because artist grantees are forbidden from serving as panelists during their grant period. But, she admitted, this was the NEA's fault, not Blumberg's. The new rules proposed by the subcommittee represent no policy change.

The House reauthorization bill and a Senate version are now before a conference committee. Grey Garwood, staff member of the House Select Education subcommittee, predicts a two-month wait before negotiations are complete. Meanwhile, despite DeLay and Armey's tactical shift to obtain their political objective—tightening the screws on the NEA—DeLay has not completely abandoned the battle against work "unsuitable" for public funding. Binder said that these recent events will make the NEA staff and panels "cognizant of the authorization and appropriations process; they know we're watching."

Like every other social program incorporated in the ethos of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, federal funding for culture has been targeted by the right. Since Reagan was elected in 1980, the NEA and NEH have been battered by this assault. Now, DeLay appears on the scene as a reborn Dondero. Judging by the CBN program and the



PBS invested $50,000 in a wraparound for "When the Mountains Tremble," hoping to make it more palatable to programmers.
Courtesy filmmakers

Policy Review articles DeLay endorses through his actions, commie artists no longer threaten our national culture. The new enemies are feminists and homosexuals.

—Martha Gever

*Quoted in *The Reluctant Patron: The United States Government and the Arts, 1943–1945,* by Gary O. Larson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), p. 34.

WHEN THE STATIONS TREMBLE

The good news is that Skylight Pictures's *When the Mountains Tremble,* the feature film on Guatemala by Peter Kinoy, Pam Yates, and Tom Sigel, will be shown on the Public Broadcasting Service on December 17 at 9 p.m. The general bad news is the second guessing, delays, reversed decisions, and general confusion that intervened between delivery of the film to the broadcasting service and its airing. The saga of the Skylight Pictures production illuminates the atmosphere in public television today and illustrates why so few independent documentaries ever get prime-time viewing.

When the Mountains Tremble was partially funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's Program Fund; in exchange, the exclusive broadcast rights were given to PBS. According to Peter Kinoy, a one-inch tape was delivered to PBS in the early months of 1985. Because the film was clocked a few minutes short, the producers had included a wraparound, produced at their own expense, featuring actress Susan Sarandon. Although they had previously submitted Sarandon's script to PBS and it had been approved, in March they learned the wraparound was unacceptable. Said Kinoy, "Gail Christian [director of news at PBS] quoted some station people who felt the wraparound was 'too liberal.'"

The idea that a number of station programmers were informally lobbying against the showing of the film made the filmmakers understandably nervous. "I wondered whether they were ever going to put it on the air," Kinoy remembered. Adding to their apprehension, an article appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* in March, claiming certain documentary scenes in the film were staged. The filmmakers quickly issued a denial and sent copies of their letter to the News and Public Affairs programming staff at PBS. They also mounted a letter campaign, generating 200 letters of support for the airing of the film.

A few weeks later, *Mountains* was given an air date of October 2. But, the filmmakers were told, PBS wanted a new wraparound "with a journalist or an academician, one that would include an interview with the filmmakers," Kinoy recalled. "They suggested Alexander Cockburn." The producers were a little taken aback by the recommendation. Cockburn, while possessing the *imprimatur* of a weekly columnist for the *Wall Street Journal,* is widely known as a journalist with a very strong leftist point of view. If PBS wanted to reassure skittish station programmers that the show was not too radical, Cockburn seemed an unlikely candidate. But the filmmakers and Cockburn agreed, and another script was approved. This time PBS agreed to pay $5,000 to cover the taping costs.

In July, a day before the program was scheduled to go up on PBS's satellite for station preview—complete with introduction by Cockburn—the showing was postponed. The producers received word that the October 2 air date had been scrapped, along with Cockburn's wraparound. Although Christian, Kinoy's main

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liaison at PBS was on vacation when the decision was made, she explained, "The staff felt the information brought up in the wraparound—the story of the fimmaking, how information was gathered—could be fleshed out a bit more. As it was, it raised as many questions as it answered."

PBS now decided to expand the program to two hours, with a lengthened introduction including historical background on Guatemala and an update on the situation there to provide additional, official viewpoints. To make the program more palatable to the stations, the staff staff thought it would be helpful if the new wraparound was produced by a member station and the whole package turned into a station product. According to executive producer Ricki Green of WETA in Washington, D.C., which agreed to do the job, the new wraparound will feature a panel with a journalist, a representative of the State Department, an expert on Guatemala, and the filmmakers. It was scheduled to be shot early this month, "to make it as up -to-date as possible." The price tag: close to $50,000.

The irony of WETA's involvement was that Kinoy had already contacted stations about the film. "When we first gave the show to PBS," Kinoy remarked, "we said to them, 'Don't you think it would be better if one of the stations presented this?' PBS said, 'OK, but you're on your own. We don't have any money for it.' We contacted some stations, but none of the producers were interested, because there was no money to pay for it."

Christian admitted that the on-again, off-again treatment of the film led to frustration. "This kind of la-de-dah has made everyone kind of crazy. Around here we call the show 'When the Stations Tremble.'" But she believed the outcome proved PBS's good faith. "Whenever you have a program with any point of view, certain stations will become hesitant about showing it. Whether the wraparound will actually improve carriage, I can't say, but I think so. It may make them more comfortable."

Christian also suggested that the problems encountered by *When the Mountains Tremble* are endemic to independent documentaries. "The problem here was not controversy, it was point of view. If *Frontline* says it's going to do a series on Central America, the stations know its coming from a major producing station. They know their concerns have already been considered. With independents, they feel they don't know what the news gathering process was, and they don't have a personal relationship with the producer. I know we're accused of being mealy-mouthed, but this a case where we've taken a risk. I think there's going to be hell to pay from a lot of sources [when it's aired], but we've braced ourselves."

Said Kinoy, "I don't fault PBS in terms of its political position. I think the staff wants to get the program on." But he labeled the handling of the film "inexcusably amateurish." During the long months following the delivery of the film, the producers were often unsure of its status. "It was almost impossible to get feedback on what was happening day-to-day. We were never allowed to talk to the people making decisions." Despite repeated phone calls, Kinoy could not reach Barry Chase, vice president of PBS's News and Public Affairs division, until Chase finally initiated contact. Kinoy summed up the experience: "The whole matter of getting station sponsorship is a way to totally bypass the 1978 legislation that called for diverse independent programming. It's more and more difficult to get productions on the air. PBS is supposed to be free of politics. But the reality is that, increasingly, it is not."

—Debra Goldman



"The Glasses," Li-Shin Yu's modern-day take on a Chinese fable set in New York City, will have a hometown screening on WNYC's new series of independent shorts.
Courtesy filmmaker

AN AD BY ANY OTHER NAME

James McKinney of the Federal Communications Commission reported, "We're seeing some unusual occurrences out there." He referred not to extraterrestrial black monoliths or communications from outer space, but to a TV spot for an auto dealership that features a video of the 1986 new car line and reminders that 7.7 percent financing is still available for '85 models. Mundane stuff for the commercial-laden world of broadcasting, but unusual given that the spot appeared on a public television station.

Complaints about announcements like this one have led the FCC to investigate several noncommercial television and FM broadcasters for offering "enhanced underwriting" opportunities that may be *too* enhanced. McKinney, chief of the Commission's Mass Media Bureau that is conducting the inquiry, declined to name the stations, saying only that "a handful" were being checked for FCC violations, but some of them serve major markets. One unnamed station has already received an FCC warning, admitted the violation, and may now face a monetary fine.

The enhanced underwriting policy allows corporate sponsors to use a logo, product identity shots, and voiceovers instead of the old standard formula, "Made possible by a grant from. . . ." But when does an underwriting credit become an advertisement by another name? The public broadcasters being investigated are testing the limits of what McKinney acknowledges to be somewhat vague FCC guidelines for enhanced underwriting. For example, there have been reports of stations quoting rate cards—a practice that may or may not be legal according to FCC rules.

Much of the criticism—and defense—of these announcements centers around issues of taste. Who could object to a dignified message from Smith Barney or Cartier? But if Cal Worthington starts marching a trained elephant across the screen to hawk his miles of cars, it's bound to shake up a few *Master*watchers who look to public television as a respite from the advertising that clutters the rest of the dial. For those who do not distinguish between "tasteful" clutter touting high-priced items and the crasser class of pitches for more populist goods, the issue is not taste but principle. Are we witnessing the privatization of the public airwaves?

Ironically, some of the sharpest criticism of the new enhanced underwriting comes from commercial broadcasters themselves. Dick Hollands, senior vice president for television of the National Association of Broadcasters, warned of "creeping commercialism" on public television. When WNET-New York sells 30-second spots in prime-time for the bargain basement price of $1,500, what commercial station wouldn't be upset at the potential competition for ad dollars? In fact, WNET's signal was assigned to educational, noncommercial television with the help of commercial television interests 14 years ago, to ensure that there would be one less competitor in the local market. Because


FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
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of this, McKinney points out, WNET is considered a commercial station in the eyes of the FCC—the only VHF public television station in that unique position. Therefore, its underwriting practices do not fall under the Bureau's scrutiny.

Public television reps have used the enhanced underwriting threat as leverage for eliciting greater support from the commercial sector. At a September 20 session of the NAB Public Broadcasting Task Force, Ward Chamberlain, president of WETA-Washington, warned, "It will do no good for [commercial broadcasters] to moan unless they help us stablize our financing." The task force is looking at a number of ways to aid public TV, including a new twist on an old idea: a fundraising gala aired on commercial stations. From the looks of it, there may be more unusual occurrences out there, should commercial broadcasters become involved in defending the sanctity of television for the public.

—Renee Tajima

WNYC PRESENTS

As another predictable fall season gets underway on both commercial and public television, one New York City station announced a schedule of new and different works. In late October, WNYC-New York began airing two weekly series, *WNYC Mini Playhouse* and *New York Screening Room,* that will feature independent works. The *Playhouse* series of narrative shorts examines interpersonal relations through comedy and drama. Programs aired on *The Screening Room* were drawn from the schedules of various New York venues for independent film and tape, including the American Film Festival, Astoria Studios, the Asian American International Festival, the Collective for Living Cinema, Film Forum, and Global Village.

The idea is the brainchild of Barbara M. Van Dyke, who plans to program more independent works in the spring of 1986. "One of the things we want to do is validate independent work," said Van Dyke. She is now looking for films and videotapes under 30 minutes in length, and as short as one minute. Send a cassette with printed information and exact length of the program to Barbara M. Van Dyke, *Mini Playhouse,* WNYC-TV, One Centre St., Rm. 1450, New York, NY 10007.

—RT

BACK TO BASICS

A portion of the National Endowment for the Humanities Media Program budget will now be diverted to new grantmaking initiatives. According to an NEH press release, "Understanding America" will support programs that contribute

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to the teaching and learning of American history and culture. The second, "Understanding Other Nations," is aimed at foreign language literacy in the U.S. Noel Milan of the Endowment's public affairs office said that the two new initiatives will follow the existing Media Program guidelines for planning, scripting, and production support, and proposals will go through the same peer review process. Milan did not know whether the existing scholar/producer composition of the panels would be modified to include more educators in order the assess the education projects that would come through under the new priorities.

The release indicates the new initiatives come partly in response to U.S. students' growing ignorance of basic American history and literature and language and cultures of other countries. The specific program emphases are outlined in a 10-page paper from acting NEH chair John Agresto, which includes sample projects that might be funded under the initiatives, although it is not yet clear what the funding priorities will be. Since no new monies have been allocated to finance new initiatives, funds will be drawn from the existing Media Program budget. At present, the Endowment's budget is frozen at its FY 85 level.

The deadline for projects for the "Understanding America" and "Understanding Other Nations" programs is March 21, 1986, for projects beginning after October 1 of that year.

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FYI

The media clip "MOMA's Hardware Store" [October 1985] misrepresented the accessibility of the Museum of Modern Art's Video Study Center. The Center, a reference library of videotapes and related print materials, supervised by Barbara London, will open later this winter. Access is limited to advanced scholars.

ARTISTS TRIP TO NICARAGUA

Ventana, a group of North American cultural workers opposed to United States intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, is organizing a trip to Nicaragua January 9-18. Host for the group will be the Sandanista Association of Cultural Workers, and the tour will include meetings with artists, and representatives of government and cultural organizations. Approximate cost, including travel, accommodations, food, and translation services, is $1,000. For more info, contact Ventana, 250 W. 54th St., #800, New York, NY 10019; (212) 586-3700.

CROSSOVER DREAMS: AFI'S NATIONAL VIDEO FESTIVAL

Debra Goldman

The obsession with film pervades the cultural atmosphere of Los Angeles like smog envelopes its freeways. So it was not surprising that, three years after the American Film Institute's National Video Festival moved to the AFI campus in L.A., the most generously funded showcase for video would emphasize the medium's connection to the aesthetics, technology, and business of film. "Video/Film/Television: Intersections," the theme of the 1985 festival, held September 19–22, did provide an opportunity to examine a few of video's current trends. But only from the vantage point of Los Angeles could video's relation to film be seen as the field's most burning issue. The focus undoubtedly says more about the prerogatives of AFI, nestled in the hills beneath the notorious Hollywood sign, than the video community the festival purports to represent.

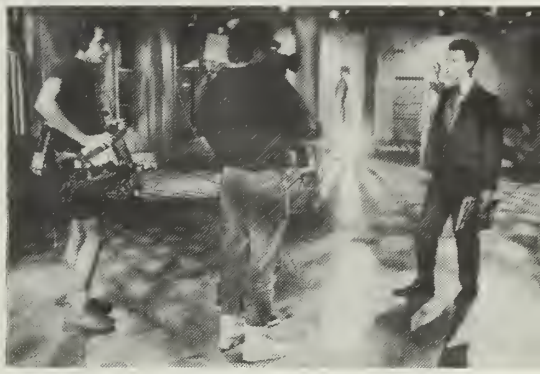
The festival's theme implicitly claimed that video is now part of a single continuum of moving image media that reaches from museums and alternative spaces to television to the film industry—embracing the entertainment industry executive and the marginal artist alike. "Only within these expanding contexts," James Hindman, executive director of the festival, wrote in the catalogue, "does the extraordinary growth and achievement of video make sense." The *L.A. Weekly,* the city's baby boomer alternative paper and consumer guide captured the spirit of the event differently when it promised in its eight-page festival preview, "The festival shows off all the latest sympathies: Film fondles video, video puts the make on television, TV cohabits with cinema."

As advertised, the festival offered viewers plenty of opportunities to catch the various forms of moving image media *in flagrante.* Sidebars included screenings of British made-for-TV movies, music videos by feature film directors, television anthology programs from the fifties and sixties by other feature film directors, television film review shows from abroad about feature film directors. . . . The presence of names like Godard, Hitchcock, and Ford, plus unprecedented advance press, attracted a local audience twice the size of last year's. And because the festival and the annual meeting of the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers were scheduled back-to-back, the AFI event benefited from the presence of "the field": media center directors, programmers, museum curators, and distributors who help shape the video scene.

The festival's centerpiece was a retrospective of "the video and television work of Jean-Luc Godard." Or so the program was called. The major works featured in the sidebar, *Six fois deux/Sur et sous la communication, France/Tour/Detour/Deux/Enfants,* and *Soft and Hard (A Soft Conversation on Hard Subjects between Two Friends),* were actually made with the filmmaker's long-time collaborator Anne-Marie Mieville. Colin McCabe, head of production at the British Film Institute and the program's presenter, credits Mieville with focusing their joint work on "quotidian realities of life in France" and the need "to confront the image at its most active point: in the circulation from the television studio to the home." These concerns form the foundation of these tapes, yet Mieville did not even rate second billing. Nevertheless, these videos provided the most challenging programming of the festival.

I did not see any segments of *Six fois deux,* a series of two-part investigations into "the processes and problems of communication," but McCabe reported that Mieville and Godard recognized these programs were too long, too dense, and too unstructured. In *France/Tour/Detour,* 12 half hours that follow the everyday lives of two children, the producers conceded to the television viewer's apparent addiction to repetition and patterns. But having adopted the conventions of format, Mieville and Godard break TV's even more powerful taboo against boredom. Long takes, fixed cameras, and still action are the sum of their formal devices, as we are asked to spend long minutes in contemplation of the "quotidian realities" of childhood in contemporary France. Viewers are forced to look, listen, and find their own points of interest in these static images, if they are going to watch at all. The hard work these tapes required did not escape the programmers at Antenne 2, the series's cofinancer. Rather than scheduling the programs as a nightly series, the tapes were lumped into feature film length blocks of 90 minutes, more suitable to dedicated viewers.

The most striking characteristic of Mieville and Godard's television is that it was so obviously cheap to produce, reminding us of video's historical promise to narrow the gap between the producers and consumers of images. Yet the SRO crowd at the New Technologies seminar organized by Peter Broderick testified to the allure of high tech. Video as a technology, not as a form of communication, was the hot topic here. Digital video, high definition television, and, above all, video's ability to interface with



No, it's not the "Ed Sullivan Show." It's David Byrne, taping a segment of "The Kitchen Presents," on view at the National Video Festival.

Photo: Paula Court courtesy AF

computers represent technological feats rendering the nineteenth-century technology of film obsolete. Just up the hill from the seminar, at the AFI's Sony Video Center, a demonstration of high definition television was open to the festival public. HDTV, its enthusiasts claim, will make it possible to shoot and post in video and still get the much preferred "film look." (Ironically, the demonstration was forced to shut down several times due to technical problems.) Only the occasionally critical approach of panel moderator David Leitner—and the hard, skeptical questions he put to the William Connolly, president of the broadcast division of Sony, the festival's sole sponsor—contradicted the technophilia otherwise evident in the seminar.

The home video panel, moderated by Broderick, was also bullish on the future. Broderick and his panelists' case for the success awaiting independents in home video bristled with numbers and inventive marketing strategies. At the end of last year, 19 percent of television households owned VCRs; by 1990, almost 60 percent are expected to. Panelist Richard Lorber, president of Fox/Lorber, a video cassette licenser, declared 30 percent the magic market penetration figure that will make the marketing of "special interest" films and tapes profitable.

For the moment, the panelists freely admitted, independents remain outside the promised land. The advances being paid for work are not yet that large. Mail order marketing, often envisioned as the perfect means to reach scattered, specialty audiences, is expensive and risky. Broderick touted the potential partnership between special interest films and nonvideo retailers catering to the same potential consumers. But panelist Les Blank, who has placed his *Garlic Is as Good as Ten Mothers* in a few West Coast health food stores, reported he made five sales from the arrangement. Dan Ochiva, programmer for the series of independent videotapes packaged by the New York City retailer New Video, drew a rueful laugh when he imitated New Video entrepreneur Steve Savage's

approach to producers: "Now watch my lips very carefully. *You are not going to make any money.*" That home video will make it possible for more people to produce media seems highly likely; that it will diversify the kinds of media produced is far less certain. The faith that home video will make successes of low budget films that have never received the benefits of theatrical release was all the more touching in the context of the festival, so heavily programmed with big names from the silver screen. Lorber summed up the possibilities created by home video when he advised producers, "Think product. Think commodity, not experience. Think ideal consumer."

One would imagine that one could find resistance to this approach in the tapes that premiered at the festival, but that was not always the case. Not surprisingly, the tapes on view looked as good as—well, as broadcast television. In their lighting and art direction they often flirted with a "film look." Much of *Luminaire,* the computer-animated tape by John Sanborn and Dean Winkler, cries out for a product to advertise, while Sanborn and Lee Breuer's *Sister Suzie Cinema* begs to be programmed on *Alive from Off Center. The Kitchen Presents,* the video/performance art variety show, is presented in the catalogue as part of the "television tradition" of "*Ed Sullivan, American Bandstand,* the *Tami Show,* and *Star Search.*"

But Max Almy's *Lost in the Pictures,* funded by a NEA-AFI Independent Film and Video Makers grant, was the most pointed example of the triumph of television's means over video's artistic ends. In her presentation, Almy explained that her tape was prompted by musings on the ways computer-generated imagery might be affecting the archetypes of the human imagination. *Lost in the Pictures* introduces us to a dark, slickly handsome leading man, a computer programmer, lounging in a bedroom tinted MTV-pink, zapping his television set. Zap, ocean; zap, fire; zap, a woman's ass in black lace. Aroused, our hero is suddenly transported into another, computer-generated dimension, joining the pictures where they live. The problem is that this new dimension looks an awful lot like ones we already know. Courtesy of the latest special effects, the pictures permeate and undulate around our hero—cascading blonde waves of a woman's hair and ruby-red lipsticked lips that look suspiciously like garden variety TV ads. Are the new archetypes of the human imagination being made on Madison Avenue? If so, Almy's computer trickery only repackages their power. *Lost in the Pictures* celebrates one's worst television nightmare come true: a future in which mediated images literally substitute for direct experience.

The 1985 event included features that have become part of the National Video Festival tradition. Robert Rosen, director of the AFI-linked National Center for Film and Video Preservation, made his third annual presentation, "Style Wars: What's News in the '80s," a structural look at network news coverage on an average day, June 6, 1985. Rosen, who has the kind of professorial style that packs the lecture hall with freshmen, somewhat exaggerated the originality of his approach—as if no one had read Raymond Williams—but he kept his overflow audience entertained. The lead news story on the evening Rosen had chosen at random to analyze was the maybe-it-is-maybe-it-isn't corpse of Nazi Josef Mengele, and it was breathtaking to see how identically the topic was treated on CBS and ABC. These segments seemed to be created by a single, iron-fisted *auteur* instead of two separate, competing news organizations.

Another regular feature was the student competition. The morning screening on the festival's first day was sparsely attended—odd, when one considers that many of the video artists who attend such a festival spend a lot of their time and make much of their money teaching just such students. Only a few dozen people saw one of the most provocative but unpretentious tapes of the festival, *Once,* a perceptual joke that unfolds in real time, created by Mary Collins, a student of Max Almy at the University of California, Los Angeles. A group of blindfolded men and women are lined up against a studio wall. One by one, they are led by a young woman to various, apparently random spots on the floor. She places one man in a prone position, another stands over him, and finally, a woman is brought to kneel beside them, her arms lifted and outstretched and her mouth opened just so. No sooner is everyone put in place than their images begin to fade, to be replaced by others that occupy their spaces on the screen. In a few seconds, the studio background is transformed into the Kent State campus, the blindfolded man lying on the wooden floor becomes a mortally wounded student sprawled on the campus grass, and the kneeling woman a terrified coed whose Munch-like scream was preserved forever by a wire service photographer in 1970. In three minutes and through the eloquent use of one simple technical effect, *Once* provoked more thoughts about image, memory, and experience than almost any other individual tape in the four-day event.

While student tapes drew small audiences, other festival screenings overflowed, as viewers lined the walls and sat in the aisles. In view of this obvious success, it was surprising to hear persistent rumors that Jacqueline Kain, director of the festival, had been fired. Kain came to AFI from the New York City video scene, and word of her departure created apprehension that the video-film industry connection of 1985 was more than another annual theme, maybe a long-term trend. When asked during the festival if Kain had been dismissed, Hindman denied it, declaring, "We think Jackie Kain is the greatest thing since sliced bread." But in October he confirmed that Kain would not return as director, saying the decision to leave was as much hers as the Institute's. He also reported, and Kain confirmed, that AFI was retaining her services as a programming consultant and administrator of several festival reprises scheduled for various cities during the year. As for the shift in the festival's focus, Hindman stated, "American independent video will always be at the center of the festival. The original purpose of the festival was to provide a high-level showcase for new and important work."

Despite Hindman's claim, the "Video/Film/Television: Intersections" theme of 1985 relegated independent tapes to the margins. One important exception was Bruce Jenkins's account of video's impact on avant-garde film, which approached the history of independent media on its own terms. "What Does *She* Want," Lynn Blumenthal's sidebar that pitted feminist video against the images of women that populate TV ads, suggested that the exchange between television and video was not all happy promiscuity. But the art videotape premieres, the festival's "center," were a series of isolated events. Each artist had his or her star moment: the tape was played, the audience applauded, the artist stepped to the podium to say a few words. Questions were ritualistically called for, but few were forthcoming, and I was never certain whether this quiescence was a reflection on the tapes, the audience, or the structure of the festival. This isolation belied any easy continuity between forms of the moving image, openly exchanging aesthetic and technical favors in a value-free creative atmosphere.

BACK TO THE FUTURE: NAMAC AND THE NEW YORK MEDIA ALLIANCE

Once again, the conference season is underway. Garment bags come out of the closets, position papers proliferate. Plans for panels are shuffled and reshuffled. Some of us veteran conference-goers, however, can't sustain the pace and skipped the fall conference of the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers and the New York Media Alliance. NAMAC met in mid-September at the American Film Institute's Los Angeles complex. Several weeks earlier, the Media Alliance convened at the Kitchen's new building in New York City. But, in the aftermath, both groups seem to have sparked renewed interest, demanding a summary and update.

In light of the history of NAMAC's vague sense of direction or purpose, the word after the 1985 conference was optimistic—tempered with skepticism. Responding to criticisms heard at the 1984 Appalshop gathering about the NAMAC board's unresponsiveness to its members, the organizers for the event and the board of directors decided to hand responsibility back to the membership. Conference chair and NAMAC vice president Nathan Lyons described their intent as "working out NAMAC's agenda in terms of its constituencies." At the conference, consti-

tuencies were designated in terms of six functions: collection, education, organization, production, distribution, and exhibition. Each function formed the basis of a working group, which met twice, listening to an invited speaker and six resource consultants. Each was assigned a facilitator and a board observer. At the conference's end, each group reported to the assembled whole, outlining future projects that might be carried out under the NAMAC umbrella.

According to new copresident Stephen Gong, the assistant director of the AFI's National Center for Film and Video Preservation, the models for a revamped NAMAC are the national and international associations of film archivists: "very loosely organized, where the goal is to share information rather than struggle to establish an office and hire a director, where almost all the work is done voluntarily." Indeed, talk of activity is in the air: specialized conferences were proposed on media education and exhibition, various information networks and surveys were discussed, and reports on the ongoing activities of each group were promised. To ensure some kind of coherence, Gong explained that each group would include at least two board members. In his view, this structure will allow the board to coordinate the various projects.

Even though the watchword for NAMAC in 1985 was membership responsibility, the conference organizers decided to forego the annual members' business meeting. In the past, these meetings have provided the only opportunity for members to address their board and vice versa. Often a mix of congratulations and passionate criticism, members were able to comment on various board decisions. Not so this year. Asked why no business meeting was held, conference coordinator Patrick Scott answered, "There wasn't enough time." Debby Silverfine, program associate at the New York State Council on the Arts, recalled traveling to AFI to attend the post-conference board meeting listed on the schedule only to find that the meeting was taking place in an unidentified hotel room.

The absence of a formal session for board reports managed to avert collective discussion about the future of NAMAC's newsletter, *Media Arts.* Many have questioned the usefulness of the publication, suggesting instead a cheaper format, with listings and information more relevant to media center personnel: grant deadlines, funding sources, staff changes, conference dates, etc. Since editor Douglas Edwards has announced his plans to resign within the year, a reevaluation would have been timely. Mary Lea Bandy, director of the film program at the Museum of Modern Art and new copresident of NAMAC, confirmed that "the question of the newsletter, the form it's going to take" will be a priority in the next year.

Likewise, members were not officially advised of outgoing copresidents Melinda Ward and Rick Weise's failure to submit a funding proposal for next year to the National Endowment for the Arts. As a result of this oversight, NAMAC's budget will be drastically reduced. NAMAC did secure renewal of its NEA-funded Management Assistance Grants program, which enables the organization to recycle money to selected member groups—and perhaps, in the future, to nonmembers, Bandy reported. Some working groups formed at the conference indicated interest in this program as a potential source of money for their projects.

Without an NEA grant, NAMAC cannot sponsor a 1986 conference, a consequence Gong interpreted as a challenge: "We have to prove ourselves in the next 18 months. Next summer would be too soon to have a conference." But members may think differently, since so many regard the chance to meet and talk with their colleagues from around the country as NAMAC's singular achievement.

Another nagging NAMAC debate—the involvement, or lack of involvement by organizations that represent various minority interests—was also relegated to the background this year. Not because NAMAC improved its record, though. Scanning the list of 48 invited participants—speakers, facilitators, and resource people, one finds four representatives of minority organizations, all in the resource category. On the present board, Gong is the only minority member. Although Lyons remarked, "I don't think it's a waning issue in anyone's mind," he found it "less a separate issue" than at past conferences. In the next few months, NAMAC will elect two board members and appoint at least one. Their representation committee has been charged with identifying potential candidates. Theirs is no easy task, since NAMAC's reputation among minority media groups remains tarnished. The committee must also address the board's gender asymmetry: two women in the 10-member line-up. The process, in committee member Toni Treadway's words, has been "frustrating."

As long as NAMAC struggles solely for survival, its "constituencies" may remain limited and imbalances replicated in its projects. The volunteer committee for the proposed exhibition conference is 100 percent white. So is the planning group for the education conference, tentatively slated for summer 1986 at the Visual Studies Workshop. That group intends to "draft a clarification of issues for the media education community." Within this broad purpose, consideration of questions specific to women and minorities is imperative. Placing emphasis on membership initiative leaves responsibility for outreach and recruitment up in the air.

But Gong sees outreach as premature, given NAMAC's spotty performance. His goals are modest: " If this board could begin to be active, that would be a success." Bandy commented, "NAMAC's in its second stage of settling in. It may do away with itself, or it may turn into a useful organization. We should not just identify needs, but articulate these, and, perhaps, draw up a few plans." However, the success of the decentralization plan—not necessarily NAMAC's viability, but its credibility as representative of media organizations in this country—depends on more attention to representation and responsible communication, which only the board can supply.

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In contrast, the New York Media Alliance, a coalition of 42 organizations and 140 individual members, featured panels on advocacy and videomaking by minority artists at its two-day 1985 conference. Both panels signalled a departure from previous annual meetings, where technology tended to be the keynote.

In the past few years, the Alliance has attained financial stability, mainly as a result of its well-regarded On-Line program, which allows producers low-cost access to commercial video postproduction facilities. Now, according to executive director Robin White, the organization plans to become involved with state-wide arts advocacy, promote a touring exhibition of videotapes, and act as broker for media equipment donations from corporations. A series of management and marketing workshops for media center staffers will be initiated if the project receives support from NYSCA.

Still, the Alliance maintains a somewhat schizophrenic identity. Formed as an association of video organizations, it now counts a majority of individual members. This split created some tensions in the past, but the different interests now seem reconciled. Individuals often join to take advantage of On-Line; some needs of the organizational members are recognized by the media equipment and workshop programs. At this point, the Alliance board numbers both individuals and representatives of organizations—and more women than men. But there is only one minority member, producer Gustavo Paredes, and one upstate member, Bob Doyle from the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester.

The recent election of board members Diana Agosta from Media Network and Debra Zimmerman from Women Make Movies may indicate a more activist posture for the Alliance. Agosta hopes to "encourage dialogue between social issue media organizations and arts organizations." Zimmerman identified a "need to bring more Third World groups and documentary videomakers" into the Media Alliance fold. And the election of Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers executive director Lawrence Sapadin as board president brings advocacy expertise to the Alliance. Rather than waiting for the members to take action, the new board's first order of business is circulating a questionnaire surveying members' needs in order to set the Alliance's course.

—Martha Gever

CREATING A COLLECTIVE MEMORY

AN INTERVIEW WITH ALFONSO GUMUCIO DRAGON

Renee Tajima

Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, the son of a former Bolivian minister of economics, has spent the last seven years working in grassroots media—from the peasant communities of his country's high plateau to post-revolutionary Super-8 workshops of Nicaragua. Today he is executive director of Centro de Integracion de Medios Comunicacion Alternativa (CIMCA), a La Paz-based media center with a comprehensive program of training, production, exhibition, distribution, archives, and publications on Latin American media. Gumucio calls CIMCA a vehicle "for the collective memory of the people in post-colonialism. One that revives the memory of the past and the culture, and one that develops alternative communications projects," in all forms, whether films, videos, slide shows, books, or silk screen graphics.

Gumucio began his work in film like many sons and daughters of the privileged classes in the developing world, studying cinema at a prestigious European school, the Institute des hautes etudes cinematographiques in Paris. After graduating from IDHEC in 1976, Gumucio stayed on for two years to write on Latin American cinema and publish two books. In 1978 he returned home to Bolivia only to find that his years of training in Europe were irrelevant in a country with no labs, no lighting equipment, and consequently, virtually no production. To begin to fill that void, Gumucio set up a tiny media center at the Center of Research for the Peasantry in La Paz, the precursor to CIMCA, and began to produce works in Super-8. I interviewed Gumucio at the Promoting the Visual Dialogue Conference in Zeist, Holland.

Renee Tajima: What did you use as a model for the media center?

Alfonso Gumucio Dagron: I didn't have any model. There was nothing before that I could use. When I came back all I had learned in France seemed useless. So I said to myself, "OK, if I really want to do important things for this country that really have a social consciousness and that can be used in the work I want to do with the community, then I have to begin at zero."

RT: Were you familiar with Super-8?

AG: No, I hadn't worked in Super-8 in France, and the only Super-8 I did in Bolivia was to help a friend, a French filmmaker, who came to shoot a film. But then I noticed how Super-8 was easy to take in hand. And when you do something in 16mm, you have to say, "I have to get the money for the project." You don't just put a can in the camera and just shoot as you do in Super-8. I never hesitated when I wanted to shoot something in Super-8, I just put the cassette in and shoot. I didn't care because the cost is so low.

RT: What was your relationship to the Center of Research for the Peasantry?

AG: The research center had many projects. For example, they had a project with the communities of the high plateau and they needed some films made. The first film I produced there, in 1979, was about one of the communities with which we had been working that was attacked by the army. So we needed to make a film that human rights organizations and the community itself could use to analyze the relationship between the army and the peasantry. This film, *El Ejercito en Villa Anta* (*The Army in Villa Anta*), was the first and biggest demonstration of what could be done with Super-8.

RT: How did you develop these projects? Where did your ideas come from?

AG: I'll tell you how it happened with Villa Anta. We were working at the office one day—it was the second of January in 1979—and these people from Villa Anta came to us. They were beaten and had been arrested, and they said, "We need your help," and told us what had happened. At the same moment we were showing a film on a hunger strike at our place in La Paz. They saw this film and said, "We want you to make a film like that one about us—a kind of testimony to what happened to us." And we went right away to the community. We shot for two days. It was very economical because almost everything we shot ended up in the film. We didn't have enough stock to shoot at a ratio of three or four to one. Most of our films are like that. This film was one to one, but the others are maybe two to one. The situation is incredible. I



Gumucio's theoretical and practical Super-8 primer for a cinema of the workers, published in Managua in 1981.

"The peasants didn't understand the fast editing that we used. So we decided to produce our films with longer shots. And even with that, they wanted to see the film over again, two, maybe three times."

have studied professional filmmaking, and I know you just throw a lot of film away when you work in 16mm or 35mm. In Super-8 it's incredible, but maybe because light is measured automatically you lose very little film.

RT: How was the Villa Anta film used?

AG: It was shown in other communities, and had a great impact because, at that time, there was kind of a treaty in effect between the army and the peasantry. At the time of these attacks, which not only took place in Villa Anta but in other communities as well, the peasants were saying that they had nothing to do with the army, that the treaty was imposed on them and they were not on the same side with the Bolivian Army.

The discussions in the communities where the film was shown were very interesting. That was the type of work we wanted to do, because we don't consider a film to be insulated. We consider it to be art—yes, it should be art, but related to social means. The best art, like *Guernica* by Picasso or Goya's paintings, is related to social events.

RT: Did you analyze the audience for this film?

AG: Yes.

RT: What were the special considerations you took into account?

AG: For example, before we began to do our productions, we showed films by other filmmakers. There were so few films available that sometimes we even showed films from the embassies of Poland, France, or any other country that would lend them to us because we didn't have the money to buy prints. And we noticed how the peasants received these films. For example, the editing was very difficult for them to follow. It was too fast. They have another way of contemplation, of looking at things. So we decided to produce our films with longer shots. And even with that, they wanted to see the film over again, two, maybe three times. It's very important to them, if you consider the fact that they have never seen film before. And if you show them film about themselves or people like themselves, it means much more. This was a very important instrument of social education and organization.

RT: How about the language?

AG: It depended on the region. When we made *Villa Anta,* the language was in Aymara because we were addressing that specific community. Aymara is the language of one of the most ancient civilizations of South America and was part of a whole culture. Right now there are still about two million Aymara-speaking people in Bolivia, where you have three major languages. Spanish is the mother tongue of only about 20 percent of the population. Aymara and Quechua are the most widespread spoken languages—Quechua being the language of the Incas. We produced in Aymara when we were in the high plateau, Quechua in the valleys, and some films in Spanish. We really believe that we cannot do one film for everyone.

RT: You try to have target audiences for particular problems?

AG: Yes, so that we could touch those problems very profoundly. For example, we could have made the film on Villa Anta in Spanish and included much more information. It could have talked about the problems in the community with this and that, and then the coming of the army... But all these details would have been useless to the peasants, because they already know the problem. So instead we made something more profound; they themselves already knew their own experience and were addressing themselves to the camera and to the people who would want to see the film.

RT: That's interesting. Asian American filmmakers often feel pressured to discuss everything in any single film, since there's so little media on our history. That hurts the films because they lose their focus.

AG: We avoided that because we think that if we produced that type of film we would have to invest more money to make it longer but more superficial. We have a kind of formula. We say that we can do ten films at $10,000 each for 100,000 people instead of one film at $100,000 for 100,000 people. We reach the same number of people.

RT: Where did you get the money for these films?

AG: Sometimes organizations in Bolivia helped us—private and progressive groups, churches, etc. I say $10,000, but it's really not that much. *Villa Anta* cost less because we had the equipment, which was worth two or three thousand

dollars. The Center for Research gave us the money for the film, and to produce it we needed only a jeep to go up to Villa Anta and something to eat, that was all. There were only two of us on the crew. Later we spent a little more because we struck 11 prints. You see these are really low-cost films so you can do them easily without taking six months out to fundraise for the project.

RT: How many films did you produce out of the Center?

AG: From 1979 until the military coup of July 1980, we were able to produce four films. Then General Garcia Mesa took over—one of the worst leaders in Bolivia. He was not only a political rightist, but was involved in drug dealing. That was the coup of the Mafia, in some sense.

RT: And what happened to the Center?

AG: It was closed before the military reached us, and we were hidden. I was pursued, but not because of working there—the Center didn't do any [overt] political actions. We did, but on a silent level. But many people at the Center worked in other things, such as the Assembly for

MAPPING A STRATEGY FOR THIRD WORLD MEDIA

Although no institutionalized alternative media movement on an international scale exists, there is a loose network of makers and organizations that fosters cooperation among the alternative movements in the Third World and industrialized countries. On September 15-18, about 40 producers and resource people from the Third World, Europe, and North America gathered at a conference on Promoting the Visual Dialogue in Zeist, Holland, to discuss ways of advancing Third World Media through multilateral cooperation.

The conference was sponsored by three organizations that support Third World film and television in Europe: Avise (the Third World news agency) and the Third Horizon Foundation—both based in Amsterdam—and Cineterz, a film distributor in Bonn, West Germany. The conference organizers and most of the participants represented nongovernmental organizations (NGOs in the lexicon of intergovernmental bodies like the United Nations) that have been instrumental in financing a whole genre of development films—from how tos on water purification to political tracts on national liberation movements.

In fact, the main event of the conference was the presence of representatives from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the European Economic Community, potential sources of substantial funds for cooperative projects. UNESCO has supported efforts to correct the imbalance of the international information order for the past four years through its International Programme for the Development of Communication. Among other things, IPDC has underwritten the establishment of three Third World news agencies, film festivals in Africa, and funded this conference in conjunction with the Dutch ministry of culture. The EEC may start financing media projects through the new cultural covenant of the Lome Convention, an aid program whereby European states support development in the African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries that they colonized for centuries.

Conference participants defined development media in broad terms; fiction was treated as a useful tool in economic, political, and social development, as important as the documentary. For example, Gaston J. M. Kabore of Burkino Faso, the secretary general of the 15-year-old Panafrican Federation of Filmmakers (FEPACI), is best known in the West for his lyrical feature *Wend Kuuni... Gift of God,* the tale of a young boy adopted by a Mossi family. *Wend Kuuni* was screened at the conference along with the work of Argentinian painter-poet-filmmaker Fernando Birri, whose nonlinear visual style has none of the trappings of the typical film-for-modernization genre.

Unfortunately, attendance by Third World producers was sparse, due to the lack of available travel funds to fly them in from all over the world. The only countries represented were Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea, Bolivia, Colombia, Jamaica, and Burkino Faso, although there were exiles like Birri of Argentina, South African Lionel Ngakana, and Iranian Reza Allamehzadeh, who now live in Europe because of the political conditions at home. Others like Parmindir Vir of England's Third Eye Foundation and Richard Fung of DEC Films in Toronto came from ethnic communities in the developed world. This lack of Third World participation hampered the conference's ability to hammer out strategies for promoting Third World film. For example, Kabore was the only Third World producer in the distribution workshop, making it impossible to assess the varying distribution needs of, say, Africa versus the Pacific Islands.

Even with this inadequate representation, the Third World producers there reached an easy consensus on a number of basic issues. Foremost, of course, was identification of cultural imperialism from the West as the most destructive force facing communications and cultures in the Third World. This was hardly news to anyone in attendance, but the effects of domination continue to be startling. According to Franklin St. Juste of the Jamaica-based Caribbean Institute of Mass Communications, his country has virtually no film production—sad news to those who have wondered what happened to Jamaican cinema after the 1973 *The Harder They Come.* Conducting research for the conference, Claus Mueller of Hunter College found that, with the exception of Latin American material, *no* television programs produced in developing countries have *ever* gotten regional or national broadcast in the U.S. The dumping of U.S. television progams and films in Third World countries is still overwhelming: even in Europe, 40 percent of airtime is filled by U.S. television dramas.

Similarly, common strategies for solutions to underdevelopment of Third World media emerged in case studies brought to the conference. Like independents in Europe and North America, Third World producers create alternative media infrastructures, particularly regional or local media centers. Groups like Bolivia's Centro de Integracion de Medios Comunicacion Alternativa run integrated programs of training, production, exhibition, and distribution—fueled by a philosophy of media democracy—akin to U.S. media centers or British film and video workshops.

The concept of establishing these media centers in the Third World marks a departure from the tradition of bringing Third World producers to developed countries for training and production. In a production workshop, Ngakana pointed out that Third World filmmakers often pick up irrelevant skills from schools in the West. He cited Ethiopian students who were trained in an ultramodern Berlin studio, but returned home to a television station in Ethiopia that was "tied up with string and wire, but on the screen the programs made there looked as if they were produced in a big studio." However, these students had no idea how to

Human Rights. I worked for an independent weekly political newspaper.

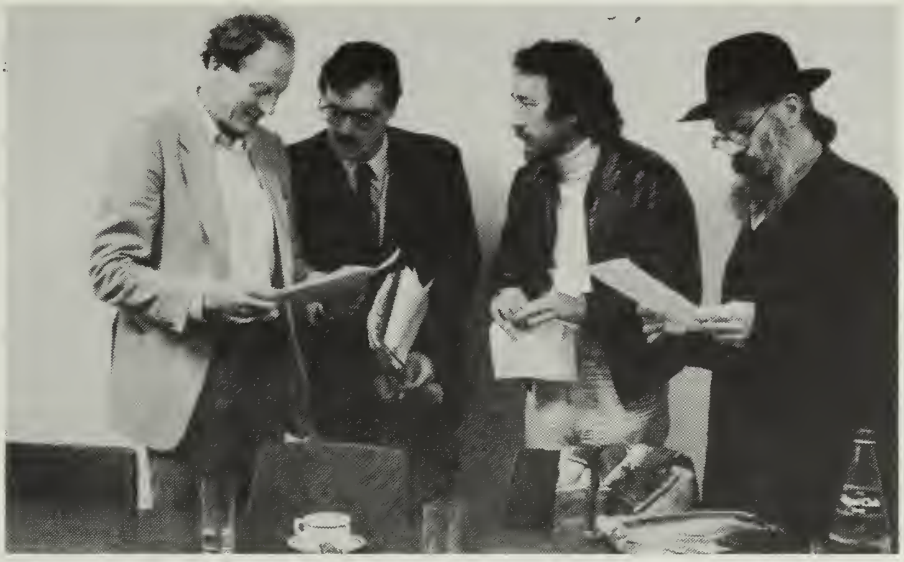
Because they were looking for me, I had to stay underground for 10 days. Then the search was tightened, and I went to the Mexican Embassy with my wife Eva. She hid with me because she'd worked at the university, where people were also underground. At that time, my father was already retired and living not far from the Mexican Embassy, so I saw him every day until the day I fled, and I never saw him again because he died while I was out of the country.

Eva was able to flee to Mexico in the first group that left, all of whom were women. If you're in an embassy, you can't just flee to a particular country, you need permission from the government. In this case, from the dictatorship. They give you a self-conduit, which authorizes you to seek political asylum in another country. They gave this to the women, followed by three or four more groups of people. And I noticed that my name was being pushed back and back—it was never on the list. Six of us learned that the minister of the interior said that we were

operate the improvised facilities in their home country. Ngakana proposed a case from Mozambique as an example of a more effective model: Mozambiquan youth work with the national film institute for about two years before attending school abroad. "At least they have a base of values, so when they return from Europe they have a context for producing in Mozambique," he explained. According to Herny Verhasselt, the executive secretary of the Centre International de Liaison des Ecoles de Cinema et de Television (CILECT), the international organization of film and television schools, his group has already revised its strategy of support and training Third World producers in correspondence with this principle of training *in* the Third World, ultimately enhancing self-reliance.

The kinship between Third World producers and the independent community in Europe and North America relates to this concept of relevant production and training values. Many of us work with the same philosophy of maximizing existing resources. Thus, John Waiku of Papua New Guinea proposed to Third World Newsreel that Asian Pacifican American independents collaborate on a training and program production project for the island's soon-to-arrive television facility, since technical skills and grassroots experience would be applicable to the material conditions of Papua New Guinea.

One recurrent—and sensitive—issue throughout the event was the production work of European and North American independents in the Third World. Helene Aastrup of Stockholm's FilmCentrum distributed a position paper, asking, "Who should make the films about the Third World?...[as for] the Swedish filmmakers that FilmCentrum represents, is their work in the Third World in conflict with the interest of filmmakers in that part of the world?" Sri Lankan filmmaker Amera Amerasinghe criticized "grasshopper films" made quickly in one Third World country after another, with Western interests dominating all levels of production.



Left to right: conferees Leonard Henny, Third Horizon Foundation; Luis Artiga, Avise; Detlef Ziegert, Con-Verlieh; and filmmaker Fernando Birri discuss conference resolutions at Zeist.

Along with others, she called on independents from the industrialized countries to collaborate with Third World producers and hire local technicians when shooting there. However, how these collaborations would take place wasn't clarified. Most independents work with tremendous money and time constraints and, therefore, hire people whose abilities they know and trust. Without solving that dilemma, participants made one concrete recommendation to intergovernmental organizations and NGOs: to funnel more of their development media dollars directly to Third World producers. This would increase opportunities for Third World producers as well as encourage the initiation of projects by them. Executive director of Avise Luis Artiga, for example, will only distribute programs produced by Third World producers.

But even this recommendation is inevitably linked to the essential contradiction in Aastrup's question—whether First World people working in the field are somehow taking on work and resources that should be controlled by people of color. In a heated discussion during the distribution workshop, one U.S. distributor was accused of "living off the backs of Third World filmmakers." At the same time, there was continuing sentiment that progressive media people in the developed nations should do more to redress the underdevelopment of Third World media that colonialism and cultural imperialism has produced. Undoubtedly, the root of the conflict is the critical state of Third World media. As a representative of the EEC warned, if nothing is done soon, cinema in Africa, for example, is doomed to oblivion.

Since the U.S. has (very proudly) withdrawn from UNESCO and is not a member of the EEC, were the North Americans present irrelevant to the proceedings? Much of the discussion at Zeist centered on sidestepping governments and creating direct links between the alternative media groups in the Third World and those of industrialized countries. In government-to-government exchanges, the U.S. has balked at Third World effort to redress the imbalanced flow of information between the developed and developing worlds. But on an organization-to-organization or producer-to-producer basis, we can work toward strengthening networks.

—RT

"We promote the view that any organization can

not to leave the country, and he was not going to give us a self-conduit. So I decided to flee by myself. I left the Embassy in disguise, with false papers, and went across the frontier to Peru. From there I went on to Mexico.

RT: What did you do with your cameras?

AG: I sold them, everything, because I needed the money to buy false papers.

RT: What happened to the films?

AG: The films were underground until the dictatorship fell. One year after the coup, there was so much popular pressure—even the U.S. didn't recognize the dictatorship—that they changed to another military rule that was a little more open. Two years later, in 1982, democracy returned to Bolivia.

RT: Did you return in that year?

AG: I returned in 1983 to do *La Voz del Minero* (*Voice of the Miners*), the film on mineworkers' radio stations. These radio stations began in 1948 with one small station created by the mineworkers union. Fifty years later there were over 25 stations. In moments of political crises, these radio stations were the only channels of free communication in the country. Miners control, operate, and train at the stations—and have ideological control over them.

RT: Were you making films while you were in Mexico?

AG: I was working as a journalist. And then the United Nations, with whom I had already worked, sent me to Nicaragua to do a project. We lived there for about six or seven months working on Super-8 filmmaking with the Sandinista Workers Center. When we came back to to Mexico, I spent my time writing, and won a national literary prize there. From time to time I worked for the United Nations.

RT: When you did return to Bolivia, did you rebuild the media center?

AG: No, when I got back I founded CIMCA. I didn't go back to the research center because, even if they were a big organization, they couldn't give more of their budget to media. So we didn't have the means to produce and address the huge demands from other organizations, unions, research centers, etc. There were so many nongovernment organizations that needed our help. They need films, audio-visuals, communications. We just couldn't do it, so I said, "Maybe if we could have a whole organization to do media, then we could help all the others." That's why we created CIMCA.

RT: What are the goals of CIMCA?

AG: We believe that if we really talk about democratization of communications, we have to put the technology of communications in the hands of the majority of people—organized people. If only a few intellectuals or people from the middle class hold the technology, we'll never democratize.

RT: What is the status of media in Bolivia overall?

AG: There's television. In 1968 there was only one channel, a state-owned station that is transmitted all over the country. In 1972 each university was allowed to have its own channel. So the eight universities in Bolivia had eight new cultural channels. These channels are very politically involved, but each one is only received in its department—the city and surrounding area. They are very progressive and make for an interesting alternative media.

RT: Who runs the stations?

AG: Normally they are run by independents, but with a lot of input from the student organizations. The independent producers are given very low pay to run it, and they don't have any money. Sometimes the whole channel is run by 10 people and they cannot produce many programs. It's a contradiction. Although it's an interesting way to do alternative communication, they don't have enough resources and are forced to run films, films, films.

RT: What kind of films?

AG: American films.

RT: Do they pay for them?

AG: No, they usually just pirate them with a parabolic antenna—dishes. Since last year, there's been authorization for private channels as well. In La Paz alone there are about four new channels, which is incredible for a country as small as Bolivia. Most of these channels obviously use parabolic antennas for getting programs like *Magnum PI, Charlie's Angels.* These private channels are making a lot of money without spending or producing programs.

RT: Is there any real production currently going on in Bolivia?

AG: We produce very little because there's no support for it. The films that *are* made are very commercial, and not even in the entertainment sense. They are usually a kind of folkloric travelogue. There's one other type of film that is very interesting. Bolivia is an example of a country with independent filmmakers who have no support but produce one feature film per year that is very good, honest, and well-done. This year it was *Los Hermanos Cartegena (The Brothers Cartegena),* by Paolo Agazzi. He is an Italian but has lived in Bolivia for a long time. And the year before, there was a very important historical film made, a big production—which for us means $120,000. There were 300 extras, a really big film. It's called *Amargo Mar (Bitter Sea),* by Antonio Eguino, and it deals with the war between Bolivia and Chile at the end of the last century, when we lost our access to the Pacific Ocean. This is a theme that we're always talking about in Bolivia—how to get back to the sea.

RT: How were they able to get the financing together?

AG: Sometimes they got loans from the bank, sometimes people invest in their work.

RT: Were these filmmakers trained in Bolivia?

AG: Some of them. Antonio Eguino studied in New York, Paolo Agazzi learned as an assistant to Eguino. There are a total of 10 filmmakers in Bolivia.

RT: Returning to CIMCA, what did you use as a model for the organization? Was it the media center at the Center for Research for the Peasantry?

AG: The experience at the Center was really important. But another experience was with the UN, because we are involved in development projects, educational projects, and so forth. I learned that the UN gives away a lot of money and equipment, but they don't do enough training. For example, when the support is retired, the project shuts down, and nothing is made after that. We really believed that if we want the projects to remain alive for a while, we must provide training to transfer use of the technology. The most important aspect of our project should be the understanding that the organization with which we are working could do their own communications.

RT: But how do they get the equipment in the first place?

AG: The project should take that into consideration. Nicaragua is a good example. We were there with the Sandinista Workers Center, with a small amount of money, but it was enough to train them and buy the equipment. After we left, the equipment was in their hands, and they continued to produce films. I've seen in the Icarus Films distribution catalogue films made by people I trained in Nicaragua—Oscar Ortiz, Francisco Sanchez, and Amina Luna, who works with Wolf Tirado and Jackie Reiter at Terce Cine.

RT: Let's talk about why you remained independent.

AG: That's easy. We want to make films without having conditions for making them. For example, if we got funds from a bank, the bank will want to get a contract, and that means we have to think in terms of profits. We cannot make films thinking in those terms because many of these films will never make profits, although they are useful for social means. We have to search for other sources of funding besides the tickets people buy to see the film.

RT: Where do you find that funding?

AG: We don't want one big organization giving

have a whole Super-8 production unit for $2,000."

money to CIMCA as a whole. Instead we are asking for money for each specific project, which is very hard, but that is the way to keep our independence. We've gotten money from UNESCO for a film, but usually those big international organizations are not the best because they're very bureaucratic and take a lot of time. They also usually work with governments, and we don't want to have anything to do with the Bolivian government.

RT: Even if it happens to be a democratic one?

AG: Yes, because it's too bureaucratic. So, for each project, for example one on human rights, we would seek funding from an organization for human rights. We haven't gotten much funding, and in these two years of work we've done a lot with very, very little money. The whole amount we've received in these past two years wouldn't be more than $12,000. So the value of our work and contribution is not in money.

RT: What production equipment does CIMCA have?

AG: We have Super-8 equipment, and we are about to get equipment to make a radio program. In the future, we intend to get into video also.

RT: Where do you get your footage processed?

AG: In Panama sometimes, sometimes in Mexico or France. We use only Kodachrome films, which can be manipulated for editing from the original.

RT: Do you use a synch-sound system?

AG: Yes, we believe that you must use the full potential of Super-8. But if we begin to work in double system, you might as well work in 16mm because the cost would be almost the same. We use the single system, very simple equipment, with a very compact little editor. We promote the view that anyone with an organization can have a whole Super-8 production unit for $2,000. Our system is very professional in some senses. For example, I have a German camera with an Angenieux lens that costs $1,500. And there's another very good camera, the Canon 1014, that we used in Nicaragua.

RT: At the Promoting the Visual Dialogue conference, some Third World filmmakers brought up the difficulties of convincing people to fund media projects in the face of competing needs. Right now Bolivia is in severe economic crisis. How do you justify the diversion of funds to media?

AG: I believe that communication is a tool for liberation. And that's why I don't just make films. I believe that the films we are producing are related to developmental, organizational, and cultural projects that are meaningful to the people and the struggle for a better life.

RT: So you work with organized groups that are working on development projects. Do they require some kind of input into or review of your films?

AG: No, because when we work with a specific group, we have already agreed on the subject. For instance, one of our latest projects is a documentary on traditional medicine. Bolivians don't have any money to buy imported medicine, so there are a lot of health problems. Many of the children are dying of the simplest sicknesses which are rooted in nutrition and sanitation. So we're doing a program that not only teaches, but also shows that there is a very old, traditional native medicine in Bolivia that has been used with very good results for 3,000 years. Although the white colonial society tried to destroy that medicine, it still exists in some spots in Bolivia.

We are working with the Bolivian Society of Traditional Medicine, which is organized with peasants who know about this technique. And we are trying to develop a whole communication network to make it known. This is the coproduction agreement between CIMCA and the organization: we will film them showing us the uses of a plant in curing many illnesses. For a technical message, we usually use slide shows because you can stop on a slide and explain things better for educational purposes. But, in this case, we will also make Super-8 films to motivate people, and the films will include a history of traditional medicine in Bolivia.

RT: Will the Society have some kind of approval over the films?

AG: We will discuss it. We know media, and they know what the plants mean. They know the content. Let's say the relationship is not like traditional filmmaking. It's a solidarity relationship. We are both willing to do this film, and the final product is the important thing, so we are willing to discuss little matters.

RT: In other words, the material need is so great that certain artistic questions are not important.

AG: No, we can propose things and say, "What if we did that?" We already know from our work with peasants the type of reception of different films. We are not making an experimental film on traditional medicine. We are going to do a documentary film, a simple film with the best possible lighting—a beautiful film that we want to show. From our point of view, we want to be useful, but we also want to prove that Super-8 is a very interesting tool, although it was kind of pushed aside when video came along, and video is the star right now. We have demonstrated that we can do a big showing for 500 people with big screens, with pictures of very good quality, good sound, and that we could blow prints up to 16mm.

RT: Do you always blow it up to 16mm?

AG: We do sometimes when we are producing films that will be shown on TV.

RT: Where do you do film-to-tape transfers?

AG: Usually in the States. Bob Brodsky does it. So nobody can see the difference between the quality of Super-8 and 16mm.

RT: How do you show the films? Are there a lot of Super-8 projectors around the country?

AG: Not a lot. We have our own projector, and there are a few others. We would like to see each union or each important group have their own equipment. To get to that point we have to show that Super-8 can be interesting for some things and video interesting for other things. Right now we are using Super-8 because we think it's the cheapest and the best quality.

RT: Do you subtitle your prints?

AG: We are going to start to subtitle, but not for our audiences because they don't read well. You have to dub films for them. Sometimes, if there's a film we want to show, we don't use regular subtitles, because that's very expensive. We have discovered a new way to subtitle that's very inexpensive. We use color slides printed in reversal and project them on the wall while the film is running. Its very easy and not expensive.

RT: We've done that in Chinatown. Do you have to take projectors to the villages?

AG: Sometimes we do that, sometimes we show films on TV. Usually we take the projector to the village with a generator because there's no electricity.

RT: When you use TV, on what channel do you show it?

AG: Sometimes the university channel, sometimes the state-owned channel. With the state, you discover whether the democratic government is really democratic or not.

RT: Are there any other filmmakers in Latin America doing this type of work?

AG: No, not many. They are producing good films, but there are few people really concerned about training and the transferring of technology to the people. As we look to the future, we hope to have more filmmakers from the popular classes doing films. We see this in Nicaragua. Amina [Luna] and Francisco [Sanchez] are doing films now and they're children of workers—that's a good start. And we want to do the same thing in Bolivia—peasants and workers producing their own films. Why not? With Super-8, this is very possible technically, and we believe that they are as creative as anyone, with the same potential to create and to make art.

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WORD PL



Mark Lussier

> I am a storyteller. I was called to be a storyteller. Now I say storyteller 'stead of a liar 'cause there's a heap of difference 'tween your storyteller and your liar. A liar's somebody who'll try to take and cover things over mainly for his own private benefit. Now a storyteller, that's somebody which'll take and uncover things so that everybody can get something good out of it.

With these words, the mythic character of the civil rights movement Junebug Jabbo Jones introduces himself in the critically acclaimed one-man theatrical tour-de-force *Don't Start Me Talking or I'll Tell Everything I Know: Sayings from the Life and Writings of Junebug Jabbo Jones.* Since the play's premiere at the Free Southern Theater in 1980, *Junebug*'s creator John O'Neal has brought this Black folk character from the South of the sixties to live audiences all over the United States and the world. His performances garnered high critical praise, but, in the estimation of writer/actor O'Neal, the play failed in one respect. The medium of theater is too expensive for those who should be *Junebug*'s primary audience—the poor and disenfranchised.

Soon after the play's debut, O'Neal began trying to find ways to capture *Junebug* on video. After several false starts, he teamed with Black videographers Arnold Bourgeois and Stevenson Palfi in an attempt to put television's capacity to attract mass audiences in service to authentic popular culture. Their collaboration, *Junebug Jabbo Jones: A Black American Journey,* is now in the last stages of production.

Beyond the obvious problems of translating materials from one medium to another, O'Neal's close identification with the play as writer and actor could have been the source of problems to a videographer, as the concerns of a theater performance are not necessarily those of a video drama. Instead, the tensions between conflicting forms of expression and between individuals with strong creative impulses proved dynamic. The resulting production offers new answers for bringing theater performance to the rectangular screen with the least amount of mediation between the viewer and the high-powered performance of John O'Neal.

The oral source materials for the stage play were originally collected by Student Non-Violent

AY VIDEO

Coordinating Committee workers in the South during the height of the civil rights movement. Black oral tradition speaks of a historical Junebug who traveled through the South, offering wisdom and entertainment to socially and economically oppressed Blacks. The character was adopted by SNCC as a composite chronicler of the times as well as a carrier of stories, aphorisms, and anecdotes—a respository of the folk knowledge grounded in oral transmission. Such humble origins link Junebug to African tribal traditions where griots and praisesingers serve as custodians of tribal history. Yet Junebug's roots are as much American as African in that the wisdom of his character is linked directly to the southern Black experience. He evolved during the sixties into a symbol of the southern Black who overcame tremendous obstacles to survive in a white land, and "Junebugisms" became synonymous with situations in which a Black person, through ingenuity and resourcefulness, outwitted would-be oppressors. At the same time, in his strength of character and will to conquer hardship, Junebug transcends black and white stereotypes to become a contemporary Everyman similar to Brother Jack of the Appalachian Mountain "Jack Tales." Junebug's dramas convey universal truths that, in his own words, "are about ordinary folks" that "everybody can get something good out of."

The universalism of Junebug's tales was reinforced by the art of O'Neal, who was once a field secretary for SNCC and, after SNCC disbanded in 1966, spent 14 years collecting and sorting the many sayings associated with the character. *Junebug* became the story of a Black American's sojourn through the South before desegregation, and the play progresses through a series of vignettes. The scenes from the play that survive in the tape represent the original synecdochically: they occur in rural and urban situations; they depict Black and white relations in both places; they illustrate a clash between the rural and the urban; they celebrate wit's power over authority; and they span three succeeding generations of cultural expression.

The first scene finds Junebug as a Black cotton picker who organizes other sharecroppers to negotiate for better wages from the plantation owner, Colonel Whitten, while resisting the overt hostilities of the white overseer Dan Skinner. The second scene finds Junebug departing his rural Mississippi town for better opportunities in the city of New Orleans. There he enters the whites-only bus station—a freedom rider before there were freedom riders—with the intention of getting arrested, thereby finding shelter and food at the white man's expense while acquiescing to the law. In jail, Junebug encounters the worldwise and well-named Sleepy, whose passive persona is a front for an effective survival strategy within a hostile environment and who arranges a job for our hero upon his release. Finally, Junebug enacts the story of Tommy Too Tough Tucker, a Black disc jockey whose program of music and talk is cancelled when white management realizes there is money to be made in Black music. Tommy is dumped to make way for commercials. The scene closes with Tommy alone in a corner talking into a tin can, continuing his show while slowly suffering a nervous breakdown.

O'Neal plays every one of these characters on a stage set with only two ladders and a small wooden plank. Capturing the dynamism and subtlety of O'Neal's stage presence was one of the major challenges of translating the play into video. In the first attempt, the play was taped before a live audience by Bourgeois. But the



result left viewers too distant from the creative heart of the play. This led Bourgeois to seek the aid of his fellow New Orleans videographer, producer/director Stevenson J. Palfi.

Bourgeois had worked for Palfi during the production of the award-winning *Piano Players Rarely Ever Play Together,* a portrait of three generations of New Orleans pianists. Palfi's production had successfully combined live music performances and artist interviews without sacrificing the intimacy necessary to such a character study, an accomplishment that equipped him to deal with some of the inherent problems of translating theater to television. Yet given the closeness of O'Neal to the material and his sense of the project's purpose, the most difficult and important task was to find a common perspective that would preserve the integrity of O'Neal's performance and the folk character of his script while rendering them accessible to a mass public. This required a thorough understanding of economy in several senses of the word.

To achieve national broadcast quality, *Junebug* required sizeable amounts of money. Unlike the theater, where staging a performance requires a fixed amount of funds, costing the same and earning revenue every evening, a video drama has all its costs built into the front end. And in contrast to theater, it is imperative to market the product before it is completed. Grant sources require firm distribution plans before they will commit funds. The result is that the material is never allowed to find its own audience. The very process of running the gauntlet of granting agencies shapes and sometimes warps the material, until it mirrors the funding sources' desires. However inherent this process is to obtaining funding, Palfi resisted the urge, maintaining the integrity of the original expression. Over a three-year period, he coordinated grant funds and in-kind support from the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Film Institute, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, Louisiana Division of the Arts, the Contemporary Arts Center, and the Amistad Research Center. Although the effort spent on paperwork for the grants rivaled the actual production work, the initial expenditure of time and money was justified by the ability to reach much wider audiences. Again and again, the question of audience emerged in different guises to confront the creators. The audience remained at the center of the translation process because it was the common ground of the various media of word, play, and video, and of the individuals involved. Broadcast at least flirts with a solution to O'Neal's initial problem with a theatrical audience; it returns the material to those who experienced it.

Repeated attempts were made to capture the dynamism of a live performance, but the participants remained disatisfied with the results. It proved impossible for O'Neal to act for a theater audience and the television audience simultaneously. The strength of the former became the weakness of the latter: O'Neal's looming presence on stage looked like overacting on video. His desire to interact with the audience, based on the aesthetics of exchange in theater, didn't work for video because the live theater audience's presence interfered with the primary television audience's relation to the play. If the blanks are filled by viewers who witness the play live, the video audience is too far removed from the locus of the action, and lapses into boredom and restlessness. The television viewers' reactions are filtered through the emotions of the theater audience.

Once the decision was made to erase the theater audience from the video production, many of the secondary problems resolved themselves pragmatically. A test shoot done on relatively inexpensive ¾″ video equipment provid-



Photo: Matt Anderson

ed a reference from which to refine camera angles and the final script. The master shooting was done on state-of-the-art 1″ equipment that employed wireless and boom microphones to increase audio clarity and convey distance from and immediacy to the characters.

The austere sets and minimal props were preserved since they provide a frame to display O'Neal's creativity and powers of transformation. Abridging the original material from two and a half hours to 90 minutes required extensive revision, rewriting, and six different edits over a nine-month period. Later, this hour and a half was pared down to a still more compact 60 minutes. On stage, O'Neal needed time to drop one character and get into another, but on tape these adjustments seemed like dead time. Instead, Palfi edited sharply from one character to another, achieving a remarkable economy of means by showing them talking to each other as if in scenes with more than one actor. The participants allowed the video technology to mediate the experience of live theater in the interest of creating a more direct relation to the television viewer.

The achievement of such intimacy can most clearly be seen by comparing the treatments of the first scene on the plantation, where O'Neal embodies three characters, Junebug, the plantation owner, and the overseer. The Colonel devises a plan to cheat cotton pickers of earned wages by rigging the scales that weigh their day's work, and Junebug penetrates this ruse. Audiences who saw *Junebug* on stage witnessed O'Neal's range as he moved from narrator and storyteller to an actor within his stories. He segued rapidly from one to the other, using his mastery of dialect to individualize each. When the Colonel spoke, O'Neal stepped up on the raised plank that represented the plantation porch, and when Junebug spoke, he returned to the stage floor, providing the audience with the visual clues necessary to follow the narrative.

Palfi's tape answered these stage devices by preserving a few of the transformations, but for the most part, he cut directly from one character to another. He even cut in shots of the white overseer chomping at the bit as he asks the Colonel, "Shall I get the shotgun?" Since Junebug's and the Colonel's responses to each other often provide crucial moments of insight and humor, Palfi had stage director Steve Kent speak one character's lines off camera while he taped O'Neal's reactions. Finally, the changing spatial relationships that provided the dynamics of the conversation on stage were replaced by expressive camera angles. We look up at the Colonel as he speaks to Junebug, and down at the Black sharecropper when he answers. Such practical solutions preserved O'Neal's performance while allowing the audience to enter the production via the lens.

The success of this project depended in large measure on the interpersonal relationships that evolved during the production, and in this sense the exchange between media mirrored the exchange between collaborators. The process was educational for all involved: John O'Neal learned to act for a video audience, i.e., the camera; Stevenson Palfi learned the technical aspects of translating a theater experience into a video experience, and Arnold Bourgeois learned an art of visualization quite different from documentary. Thus, in *Junebug,* the exchange between theatricality and videography and the steps taken to balance aesthetics and economics resulted in a production entirely different from that originally envisioned, but one that succeeds in returning Junebug's stories to the people from whom they came.

Mark Lussier is media arts director at the Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans and teaches English at Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge.

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SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF AIVF BOARD MEETING

The newly-elected AIVF and FIVF boards of directors held their first meeting as part of a combined, day-long board/staff retreat on September 12, 1985, at the Wave Hill Conference Center. The board heard and discussed staff reports on each of AIVF and FIVF's programs and activities and deliberated over the organization's mission, the board's function, and the future of the Indie Awards, a ceremony reinstated for AIVF's tenth anniversary last June.

In the first staff report to the board, executive director Lawrence Sapadin singled out national growth as the dominant trend and challenge for AIVF. With a majority of the board consisting of non-New Yorkers and membership increasing, AIVF has never been stronger or in a better position to provide services to the national independent producer community. AIVF has continued to coordinate the advocacy work of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting producers, has negotiated a new Screen Actors Guild "low low budget" agreement, has installed computers for membership and other information records, successfully celebrated its tenth anniversary, and revived the Indie Awards tradition.

Martha Gever, editor of *The Independent,* reported growth in circulation over the past year. During that time, the magazine was redesigned and a new art director hired. Debra Goldman has replaced Susan Linfield as associate editor. Advertising has increased modestly; ad rates will be boosted. In the coming year, the magazine's size probaby will remain stable. Regional distributors will help us reach more potential members outside the New York area.

Membership director Andrea Estepa reported that membership has grown by about 1,000 over the past year, reaching over 4,000. Our experimental joint membership program, with the Center for New Television (Chicago), UCVideo (Minneapolis), and the Media Project (Portland, Oregon) has been successful. The Southwest Alternate Media Project is scheduled to join the program this fall.

Seminar director Charlayne Haynes plans to emphasize cosponsorship of seminars with other organizations and bolster publicity and promotion. This fall, AIVF is cosponsoring a symposium on documentary films in association with Valley Filmworks's Documentary Film Week. Future programs will focus on ancillary rights, limited partnerships, and broadcast strategies, among other subjects.

Business manager Tom Sutton reported that AIVF and FIVF have been operating within budgetary limits, and will, this year, issue their first audited financial statements.

Development director Mary Guzzy reported on fundraising efforts over the past year, including the Tenth Anniversary Celebration, and proposed a series of goals and recommendations for the coming year.

Festival Bureau director Robert Aaronson reported that the bureau continues to maintain files on over 400 foreign and domestic festivals and has provided liaison services for several festivals this year, including the Mannheim and Sydney festivals.

On the new business agenda, the board reached a consensus on draft language for a mission statement emphasizing advocacy and national services. An *ad hoc* committee will draft final language that will be submitted to the membership in *The Independent.*

The board agreed that its role is accountability to the membership for policymaking and the financial stability of AIVF and FIVF, and set a fundraising goal of $15,000 for FY 1985–1986. The board adopted a Development Committee report that called for the continuation of the Indie Awards evening and a search for appropriate nonelected individuals to be appointed to the FIVF board. Finally, the board resolved that the Development Committee should review and revise the AIVF/FIVF Advisory Board.

The board elected the following officers: Robert Richter, president; Christine Choy, vice president; Lillian Jimenez, chair; Brenda Webb, secretary; Joyce Bolinger, treasurer.

The following standing committees were reestablished: *Development* (FIVF), involved with fundraising, board development and the Indie Awards; *Advocacy* (AIVF), devoted to strengthening independent media by representing producers' concerns to unions, government agencies, state and federal legislators, and in the commercial marketplace (trade shows, etc.); *Membership* (AIVF), concerned with setting goals and strategies for membership growth, especially outside the New York area, including the formation of chapters.

Members are encouraged to join committees. For more information, call Larry Sapadin at AIVF, (212) 473-3400. The next board meeting has been scheduled for December 6, 1985. For more information, call AIVF.

PRINCIPLES AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION

AIVF FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

1. The Association is a trade association of and for independent video and filmmakers.

2. The Association encourages excellence, commitment and independence; it stands for the principle that video and filmmaking is more than just a job—it goes beyond economics to involve the expression of broad human values.

3. The Association works, through the combined efforts of its membership, to provide practical, informational and moral support for independent video and filmmakers and is dedicated to ensuring the survival of, and providing for, the growth of independent video and filmmaking.

4. The Association does not limit its support to one genre, ideology or aesthetic, but furthers diversity of vision in artistic and social consciousness.

5. The Association champions independent video and film as valuable and vital expressions of our culture and is determined, by mutual action, to open pathways toward exhibition of this work to the community at large.

AIVF RESOLUTIONS

1. To affirm the creative use of media in fostering cooperation, community and justice in human relationships without respect to age, sex, race, class or religion.

2. To recognize and reaffirm the freedom of expression of the independent film and videomaker, as spelled out in the AIVF principles.

3. To promote constructive dialogue and heightened awareness among the membership of the social, artistic and personal choices involved in the pursuit of both independent and sponsored work, via such mechanisms as screenings and forums.

4. To continue to work to strengthen AIVF's services to independents, in order to help reduce the membership's dependence on the kinds of sponsorship which encourage the compromise of personal values.

CAMERA LUCIDA

David Leitner

Electronic Cinematography: Achieving Photographic Control over the Video Image
by Harry Mathias and Richard Patterson
Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1985, 251 pp., $24.00

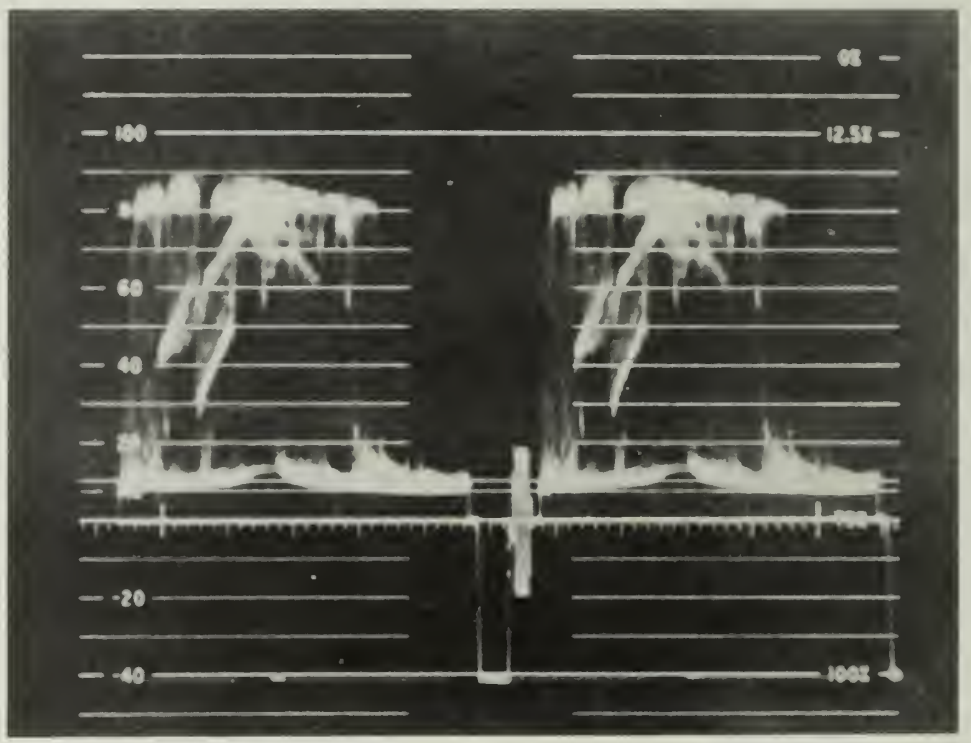
A painter is a painter whether the medium is oil or water, and it's the contention of coauthors Mathias and Patterson of this unique video primer that a cinematographer is a cinematographer, whether the camera contains sprocketed film or photosensitive pick-up tubes. Declaring that lessons distilled from 80 years of filmmaking pertain to video production today, *Electronic Cinematography* sets out to familiarize cinematographers with the electronic counterpart of their film camera. It encourages them to experiment, i.e., to exercise the same creative visual control that they're accustomed to in film, and offers the means to acquire the technical confidence to do so. Individual chapters address the optics, mechanics, and electronics of the generic video camera. Color balance, exposure control, and lighting are explored through an understanding of video tone reproduction, approached through an enlightened analogy to film sensitometry. Other topics include synch, time-base correction, color burst, waveform monitor, vector scope, NTSC, standards conversion, and recording formats.

Electronic Cinematography poses the question, how can a set or location be meaningfully lit without a light meter in hand? It is true that with enough light, technically correct signals can be registered on the waveform monitor and displayed as recognizable images on the video monitor. But if *mise-en-scene* means anything, if lighting plays any role in engaging the emotions, then more control is needed. Hence, "Achieving Photographic Control over the Video Image."

If a camera is a camera, the argument continues, then the fact that a video camera captures images by nonphotographic means doesn't obviate the need for a superb lens, matte box, filter set, focus-pulling assistant, gear head, dolly, dolly grip, lighting, lighting crew. . . not to mention formal aesthetics. Anyone can "point and shoot" a video camera—as the folks introducing the new 8mm camcorders are doing their best to convince us—but genuine cinematography represents a studied approach, a deliberate consciousness. The genius of this book is to make this rare insight seem patently obvious.

The book should also be read as an opportunity to sample the thinking of two of the most conscientious and articulate observers on the





A waveform display of a frame from one of your favorite Hollywood classics appears in "Electronic Cinematography" to illustrate how waveform monitors can be used to "control the video image."

film/video scene today. Harry Mathias was one of the first cinematographers to seriously embrace video, perfecting in 1972 an early mini-cam system for portable film-style production. For the past five years he has traversed the country leading energetic seminars in the application of film techniques to video production [see: "A Seminar on Electronic Cinema," *The Independent,* November 1982]. Recently he has participated in several S.M.P.T.E. committees exploring the adoption of a worldwide standard for high definition television. Mathias's co-author, Richard Patterson, studied philosophy and literature at Yale and Cambridge before shooting and producing his own 16mm documentaries (e.g., *The Gentleman Tramp,* a Chaplin bio). He's perhaps best known as the controversial recent editor of *American Cinematographer* who overhauled the magazine's layout and introduced regular coverage of video technology, motion picture history, and independent filmmaking.

It's no surprise, therefore, that *Electronic Cinematography* not only describes how to creatively control the video image, it attempts to explain why. For instance, each chapter is flagged by a short preface that conveys the approach taken to the topic and the motivation behind the approach. The final chapter takes up the larger question of "whether there are really any advantages to electronic production?" While concluding that a major advantage is the creative potential for altering the characteristics of the image during and after recording, the authors caution that video technology is seductive and that video production can be "a very abstract activity that tends to divorce a cinematographer from the basic aesthetic issues at hand." Issues like lighting, framing, camera angles, and movement, rather than signal levels and camera setup.

Those who've attended Mathias's seminar, "Production Techniques in Electronic Cinematography," will find much of this territory familiar. For many of them, this event provided a conceptual framework with which to grasp the electronic revolution transforming their profession, and it's gratifying to see the substance and spirit of this seminar preserved in print for those who missed it. Sometimes the book preserves the spirit of the seminar a little too well. The text often reads like spoken remarks, transcribed without benefit of later editing. Potentially confusing technical terms like "dichroic" and "deflected" and "gain boost" are dropped into the discussion without explanation, or only defined at a later point. And some prior knowledge of the subject under discussion is required. Each waveform display in the chapter on waveform monitors depicts two fields of video at once, yet this is never made explicit and would easily confuse a reader with no previous introduction to waveform monitors. Another example, one of Mathias's most notable suggestions, is the use of a photographic light meter to determine an ASA-type exposure index for a video camera. Much is made of matching the light meter's ASA-indexed slide to the final camera setup in extrapolating the working exposure index, without pointing out that most light meters don't use this system of slides. The light meter in the example, which is perfectly obvious to the practiced cinematographer, is the Spectra, but this specialized knowledge shouldn't be presumed.

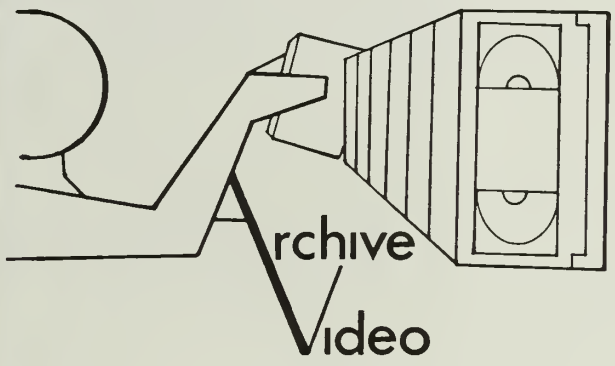
Such glitches aside, *Electronic Cinematography* is lively and up-to-date. And it mercifully spares us the technological politics that too often masquerade as art and aesthetics. There's no advocating the "look" of films vs. video or promoting the claim currently fashionable in the consumer press that some incarnation of High Definition Television will soon surpass 35mm on some decisive qualitative level. (Although the brief chapter on the prospects of high definition television is the most cogent and concise discourse on the subject I've read anywhere.) Rather, *Electronic Cinematography* respects the vitality of both film production and video production as it eagerly anticipates the emerging overlap of both techniques. It's an original and recommended reading.

David W. Leitner is a consultant and independent producer based in New York City.

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MEGA-MOVIES: THE SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Cynthia Leslie

Every year the San Francisco International Film Festival features at least one drawing card, usually a celebrity accompanied by a strong film. Although this may appear at times to overshadow lesser-known artists, the purpose is actually to bring in an audience for everyone's films. At the 1985 SFIFF, the main event was an appearance by Vincent Price and a screening of *The Tomb of Ligeia,* with dinner tickets selling at $125. This proved to be a successful fundraiser for the festival. Ann-Margret was also on hand to talk about her early roles as a sex kitten and her later efforts to erase that stigma.

Publicity tactics for the festival included an amusing trailer, shown in local theaters, with a Frankensteinian Gene Wilder yelling, "Give my creation life!" The creation, of course, is the SFIFF. Advertisements ran in local papers, and thousands of schedules were deposited at cafes and hangouts. Many of the films were screened for the press a week or two before festival openings. John Lyddon, producer of *Canyon Consort,* credited the festival's publicist Karen Larens for the sell-out crowd for his hour-long music film, made with the Paul Winter Consort.

About 25,000 tickets were sold at this year's SFIFF which is, at 28-years old, the longest running film festival in the United States. The SFIFF boasts strong international representation, especially from the Third World. Of the 80 films from nearly 30 countries, 11 were Asian and 16 were from Latin America. Other foreign entries came from Eastern and Western Europe. Many of the films in the festival were produced by independents, some of whom were relatively new to feature filmmaking. Sixteen of these films were made by women, but there was almost no representation from Black and Hispanic Americans. Most of the works were fiction features—I cannot remember seeing any experimental films—although there were a few works that expanded and liberated the filmed story form, such as Philippe Garrel's *Liberty, The Night* (France).

About 20 percent of the entries for the 1985 screenings were unsolicited. "We like to be known as an invitational festival," said artistic director Peter Scarlet. "If you compare the size of our staff to other major festivals, you'll know why. We don't want to be overloaded with entries, go nuts, and feel like committing suicide." The SFIFF has three full-time staffers and a number of part-timers and volunteers who work close to festival time. The festival underwent a change in management several years ago and has since doubled its size. Programming is done by Scarlet, along with staff member Steve Horowitz and a programming committee that meets periodically throughout the year. In 1983, the SFIFF shared its programming with Filmex, leading some to believe that they are affiliates. In fact, apart from the arrangement that year, SFIFF and Filmex show some of the same films only by coincidence.



Sonny Rhodes and the Texas Twisters played the San Francisco International Film Festival in Alan Govenar and Les Blank's "Cigarette Blues," shown in the festival's Bay Area Filmmakers Showcase.

Photo: Patricia Monaco

Last year, with 567 entries, competition fees totalled about $39,908 for film and video. The $1,000 Grand Prize went to Gail Singer's *Abortion: Stories from North and South,* a National Film Board of Canada Studio D production. Additional awards were a $500 Silver Prize, a $250 Bronze Prize, and 15 Best of Categories at $125 each. Another 25 honorable mentions and 20 participations of merit were given (although many did not get shown during the event). Finally, there was also a Television Special Programs Competition.

The SFIFF screenings were held at six theaters at five different locations. Ticket prices ranged between three and six dollars, or $40 to $215 for series subscriptions. The quality of the projection was generally excellent and the theaters comfortable. However, the distance between theaters made for a lack of intimacy and created logistical problems for heavy viewers, even those with cars. The theater sites were the 200-seat Kokusia in Japantown; the 1,000-seat York and the 2,000-seat Roxie in the predominantly Latino Mission District; the University of

California at Berkeley's 199-seat Pacific Film Archives, where 11 of 28 shows sold out; and the 1,000-seat Palace of Fine Arts with its adjacent 75-seat Exploratorium. The Palace is inaccessible without private transportation, which may explain why the attendance at the Palace averaged 390 tickets per show.

The festival received some criticism for not involving certain sectors of the local community. Recognizing this oversight, Scarlet hopes "to make more efforts at reaching out, say, to the Asian communities." As part of this effort, the soon-to-be-opened 425-seat World Theater in Chinatown may be a site for the 1986 SFIFF.

One of the special attractions of film festivals is the opportunity for audiences and filmmakers to converse, and many filmmakers made themselves available at SFIFF. Discussions on Latino films at the York were informative, with large audiences participating. But except for a few milkshake restaurants in the nearby Mission District, festival-goers encountered a remarkable lack of gathering places like meeting rooms, cafes, or other comfortable spots where such discussions might continue.

Although most of the films screened had already been picked up by a distributor, the high visibility of the festival can be a boon for those that haven't. By the end of this year's event, about three films screened had been slated for theatrical release. One documentary feature by local independent Terry Zwizoff, *Louie Bluie,* was picked up as a result of the enthusiastic festival response, and will continue playing at home at the York Theater.

The 29th San Francisco International Film Festival will run for ten days, beginning March 20, 1986. The entry deadline for submissions is January 1, and entry fees vary according to category. For applications and information write to SFIFF, 3501 California St., Ste. 201, San Francisco, CA 94118; (415) 221-9055.

Cynthia Leslie is a freelance writer and filmmaker based in Toronto.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Robert Aaronson and Judith Radler. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement,** and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

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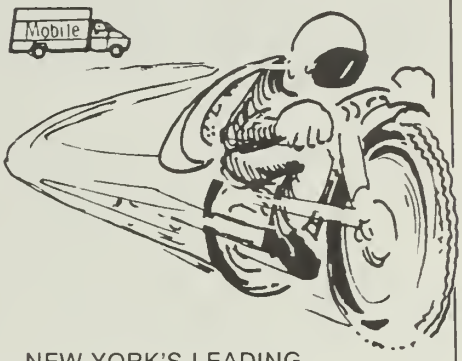
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"Family Romance" screened at last year's New York Film and Video Expo.
Courtesy filmmaker

non-theatrical media users. This competition, now in its 28th year, is headed by newly appointed director Sandy Mandelberger. Last year's fest screened nearly 500 films & tapes during a 6-day marathon that included awards ceremonies, seminars & an exhibition floor. 1986 will kick off with a day-long conference on copyright issues for film & tape. Approximately 2,500 registrants, half of which are EFLA member-type buyers, are expected to attend. Six-day screening passes are about $100. Booth rentals for the "market" floor are separate & Mandelberger hopes to establish a "special independents table to allow video/filmmakers to promote their works (rentable on hourly or half-day basis)." Even though money is not allowed to change hands at the market due to EFLA's nonprofit status, Mandelberger hopes that producers, distributors & buyers will be encouraged to make deals.

Other innovations for this year are the reorganization of the complex submission categories & the direct competition between film & video in the same categories. The 60 preliminary juries from around the country will include 2 "subject specialists," 2 "utilization specialists" & 1 "production specialist" & will be balanced with regard to film & video biases. Mandelberger termed the combination of film & video "an experiment" but hoped that it would expose users with subject-specific interests to all media. In addition, in order to appeal to a "general audience," work that is strictly for classroom, business & industry & the health care professions will be judged by the preliminary juries & not publically screened for attendees & juries in New York. The latter will select Blue & Red Ribbon winners and Honorable Mentions from the finalists. Categories include: Shorts Showcase, Arts & Humanities, The World Around Us, Video Vanguard, Children & Young Adults, Health & Education & Feature Focus. Fees: $50–$160. Formats: all are acceptable, but works must be available in 16mm or ¾". Deadline for forms: Jan. 13. Entrants will be informed by Feb. 1 where to send copies of their entries. Deadline for films & tapes: Feb. 13. Selections by April 1. Award-winning work tours EFLA constituent organizations after festival. Contact EFLA, 45 John St., New York, NY 10038.

● *ASIFA-EAST ANIMATED FILM AWARDS,* Jan. 30, NYC. An evening of recognition for the field of animation. Entries (16mm or ¾") are awarded certificates in 7 categories: animation, concept, design, direction, soundtrack, student & overall ('85's winner in this category was Michael Sporn's *Dr. De Soto*). All winning works receive exposure throughout the year in the U.S. & Canada. Deadline: Jan. 3. Fees: non-sponsored $5–10; sponsored $30–40. Contact Richard Rauh, c/o Optical House, 25 W. 45 St., New York, NY 10036; (212) 869-5840.

● *BIG MUDDY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* Feb. 4–9, Carbondale, Illinois. Organized by a dedicated committee from the Dept. of Cinema & Photography at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. Submissions in 16mm & ¾" reached an all-time high of approximately 110 last year. Nearly all were screened free for the public & jury during the day, with special events planned for the evenings. This year Christine Choy will serve as a juror & present an evening of work from 3rd World Newsreel & Haskell Wexler will screen his new film *Latino.* Tony Buba (*Voices from a Steeltown, Lighting Over Braddock*) will also be a juror. The final evening is devoted to a best of festival program where award-winning works are presented before a sold-out audience of 300-plus. $1,500 is divided between the winners at the judges' discretion. Films & videos in all genres & running times compete together. Last year's winners were *The Fall of The I Hotel* by Curtis Choy, *Witness to War* by Deborah Shaffer, *Nexus* by Rose Bond, *Last Pullman Car* by Kartemquin Films, *Patchwork* by Jeanne Lusignan & *Made for TV* by Jamie Hellman. A Tarkovsky retrospective was highlighted at the 1985 event. Entry fees: $20–$30. Deadline: Jan. 24. Contact BMFF, Dept. of Cinema & Photography, Southern Ill. Univ., Carbondale, IL 62901; (618) 453-2365.

● *LONG BEACH INDEPENDENT VIDEO FESTIVAL,* May 13–16, California. 2nd annual event sponsored by a committee of independent video organizations, including the Int'l Documentary Assn., AFI, IFP/West, Assn. of California Independent PTV Producers, etc. Runs concurrently with the L.A. Professional Videoshow and Video Production Conference at the Long Beach Convention Center. Independent producers are invited to



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● *NEW YORK FILM & VIDEO EXPO,* Jan./Feb., NYC. 20th annual competition for films & tapes with running times under an hour. Organized by Nick Manning and sponsored by the Brooklyn Arts & Cultural Council, this exhibition of approximately 50 works, totaling 6–7 hours, is shown in a number of NYC venues including the Metropolitan Museum of Art (this year Jan. 25 & 26) before selected works tour nationally through June. Participating films last year included *The Car of Your Dreams, Eating Mangoes, & Family Romance;* tapes included Ilene Segalove's *Riot Tapes* & Jon Alpert's *Housing in America.* Festival pays $2 per minute for work screened with a minimum payment of $5 and a maximum of $50. In addition, a jury of 10, including 5 representatives from the National Academy of TV Arts and Sciences, screens the work with an audience & selects prize winners who are given in-kind awards at places like DuArt and TVC Labs. Each year the Expo publishes *Lamp,* a journal of film criticism, containing jurors' remarks about films screened in the Expo.

Although well established, this event is hamstrung by budget & organizational constraints that have frustrated filmmakers. As Manning explained, he runs the Expo singlehandedly & without pay. All entry fees & NYSCA money go to filmmakers & unfortunately, the festival contacts at BACA know little about the event or film & video. Needed, around festival time, is a staff, or even a single volunteer who can deal with producers, schedules & publicity.

In the past a representative from the Oberhausen film festival has stood on the jury for the Expo. At this time, Karola Gramann, director of the Oberhausen Short Film Festival, will be screening work at AIVF instead (see "Oh Oberhausen" in the November *Independent*). Send your work to AIVF specifically for Oberhausen. The national tour of work in the Expo is organized by Ron Epple, Picture Start, 204 W. John St., Champaign, IL 61820; (217) 352-7353. Submissions for the Expo must be noncommercial. Format: 16mm & ¾". Deadline: Jan. 4. Fees: $10 & $14. Contact for forms: Janet Sanders, BACA, 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn, NY 11238; (718) 783-3077.

FOREIGN

● *GOLDEN ROSE OF MONTREAUX TV FESTIVAL,* May 7–14, Switzerland. 26th annual event for producers & programmers. Entries: light entertainment, produced &/or broadcast since April 1985 (music video entries since Jan.). Various awards include prize for funniest program. 1985's Press Prize won by *Barishnikov by Tharp with the American Ballet Theater,* Don Mischner Productions, an independent U.S. company. Deadlines: independent producers contest 3/1; national broadcasters contest 3/30; music video contest 4/15. Contact John E. Nathan, N. American Representative, 509 Madison Ave., Suite 1810, New York, NY 10022; (212) 223-0044.

● *MIP-TV INT'L TV PROGRAM MARKET,* April 24–29, Cannes, France. Spring market meeting place for programmers, producers & buyers from over 100 countries. Gathering provides an intense atmosphere of dealing & coproduction agreement making. Categories: video sales market (TV programs); film sales market (feature TV films). Fees are staggered according to facilities hired; $2,000 min. for stands, $450 for passes only. Contact David Jabobs, Perard Associations, 100 Lafayette Drive, Syosset, NY 11791; (516) 364-3686.

● *QUEBEC INT'L SUPER-8 FILM FESTIVAL,* Feb. 18–23, Montreal. 7th annual event dedicated to screenings, business & discussions on technological advancements. The Association pour le jeune cinema quebecois, which organizes the program, screens selected films in the provinces for several months after festival, thus broadening its impact. According to festival director Michel Payette, they are especially interested in productions from young independent filmmakers that demonstrate honesty & work. Deadline: Jan. 10. Applications available at AIVF. Contact Michel Payette, Director, Quebec International Super-8 Festival, 1415 rue Jarry est, Montreal H2E2ZY, Quebec, Canada; tel. (514) 252-3024.

● *SANTAREM INT'L FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL,* April 5–13, Portugal. In its 12th year, this year's theme is the relationship between man & the environment. Program offers screenings, seminars, lectures & exhibitions. Short films (35mm or 16mm), 45 min. or less, must have agricultural/environmental themes. Other 2 categories—feature films (35mm only) & video—can use fictional/free styles. 7 of the 30 shorts screened in 1985 were U.S. entries, including *The Insect Challenge,* Bravura Films, Inc., which won the Bronze Bunch award in the agricultural (documentary & cultural) section. 20 feature films were shown, among them the Cuban production *Alcino and the Condor,* directed by Miguel Littin, winner of the '85 Celluloide Prize. Deadlines: entry forms, late Dec.; prints, mid-Jan. Contact Festival Internacional de Cinema e do Filme Agricola de Santarem, R. Capelo Ivens 65-2, 2000 Santarem, Portugal; tel. 2 21 30/2 30 65.

● *STRASBOURG INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL,* March 16–25, France. 14th annual event "promotes the discovery & awareness of films whose subjects inspire a reflection on human dignity & on the violation of basic human rights as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." This competition for shorts & features awards 2 prizes of 20,000F & 5,000F. No U.S. films were among the 34 in the Information & Competition sections in 1985. Also featured last year: a Peter Basco retrospective and a selection programmed by French actress Delphie Seyrig that included *The Honeymoon Killers* & Alex Rockwell's 1983 independent feature *Hero.* Deadline for forms, synopsis, director's biofilmography, press materials & stills: Jan. 20. Deadline for films in 16mm & 35mm only or copies on ¾" or VHS NTSC cassettes: Feb. 10. Filmmakers will be informed of selection by Feb. 20. Fest pays return shipping. Contact 1 Quai Lezay-Marnesia, 6700 Strasbourg-France; tel. 33 88 35 0550.

● *TAMPARE INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL,* Feb.-Mar., Finland. 16th annual event is showcase for films with a human theme, utilizing new forms of cinematic expression. Films must be 35mm or 16mm positive prints, 35 min. or under, for international competition. Deadline: mid-Jan. Send films or cassettes (allowing time to ship the film later). Applications: Tampare Film Festival, Box SF 33101 Tampere 10, Finland; tel. 358 31 35681; telex 22448 tam sf. Films should be sent to Tampere Film Festival, c/o Tamparen Huoluta ja Kuljetus Oy Sammonkatu 64 ST 33540, Tampare 54, Finland. Air Freight Tampere Prikala Airport. Forwarding agent telex 22173 thk. sf.

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IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION

Mary Guzzy

First-time producer Mark Mori of Atlanta ventures into the nether world of nuclear weapons history with **Building Bombs**, scheduled to finish shooting in early 1986. The film, which will run 28 minutes, is "an inside view of the people who work with nuclear weapons at the Savannah River Plant in Aiken, South Carolina...why some of them came to question what they were doing and quit, and why others didn't." It was recently reported that the 300-square mile Tuscaloosa Aquifer, partially located under the SRP and supplying water to the states of South Carolina and Georgia, now shows evidence of radioactive contamination.

Mori has filmed at the Savannah River Plant, a distinction shared only by ABC News, and will intercut this contemporary footage with archival government films and interviews with nuclear physicist Arthur Dexter, nuclear engineer Fred Christensen, James Edwards, former U.S. Secretary of Energy under Reagan and one-time governor of South Carolina, former plant employees, official SRP spokespeople, and local residents. *Building Bombs* is targeted for television distribution as well as grassroots organizers, anti-nuclear activists, and educators.

Massachusetts producer Lisa Berger is currently in production with Carol Mazer on **All Our Lives/De Toda la Vida**, a ½" video documentary about the women who fought for social revolution during the Spanish Civil War. In the days before Franco's fascists put an end to Spain's socialist experiment, these women worked in the industrial and agricultural centers and the militia. Now in their seventies and eighties, these women—many of whom are living in exile—continue to organize, teach, and speak about political and cultural oppression. Berger shot footage in Spain and France with support from an ITT International Fellowship, which she was awarded as seed money for the tape. *De Toda La Vida* will be available in Spanish and English, and will be released in July 1986 to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the Spanish Civil War. Berger's previous coproduction with Robbie Leppzer, **Harvest of Peace**, premiered at the Telluride Festival in Colorado this past September.

Animator Joanna Priestly of Portland, Oregon, screened her four-minute film **Voices** at the 1985 Telluride Film Festival and the Hiroshima International Animation Festival. *Voices* focuses on common fears to create "an inquiry into how the attitudes we hold in our minds can affect the world we see around us." The film was made on 3,000 four by six-inch index cards and includes cut-out and object animation, with a soundtrack by Golden Reel Award winner Dennis Wiancko. Priestly produced *Voices* as her Master of Fine Arts thesis film at the California Institute of the Arts.



"You are what you fear" is the theme of Joanna Priestley's animated film "Voices," screened at Telluride and in Hiroshima.
Courtesy filmmaker

Producer/director/writer Ted Cochran has sold his 1983 documentary **Island of the "Bounty"** to Britain's BBC-TV. The film documents a modern-day expedition across the Pacific to trace the route of Fletcher Christian and the mutineers of the Bounty to tiny Pitcairn Island, where their descendents live almost 200 years after Hollywood's most famous mutiny. *Island of "Bounty"* won a 1984 CINE Golden Eagle and was featured this year in festivals in La Rochelle, France, and Cartagena, Spain. It is available on home video cassette through Cochran's Mill Valley, California, distribution company, Compass Rose Limited.

Karen Sheldon and David Weiss of Blue Hill Falls, Maine, went to the archives to make **From Stump to Ship: A 1930's Logging Film** with $22,000 in funds from the Maine Humanities Council, the University of Maine at Orono, and Champion International Corporation. Produced from footage discovered at the University of Maine and a 1930s script narrated by Maine humorist Tim Samples, the 28-minute *From Stump to Ship* is a record of horse- and human-powered logging, river driving, and sailing schooners that brought lumber from the North Woods to market down the East Coast. The film premiered at the University of Maine in September and subsequently toured the state.

Waterbury, Connecticut's Gorman Bechard has completed his second feature, **And Then?**, a 100-minute "morality play" about a reunion of four college friends. Lives, beliefs, dreams, and sexual fantasies are examined over drinks and dinner. Working with friends and colleagues, Bechard brought the project in for just under $100,000. He acted as producer/director, cowriter with Carmine Capobianco—one of the film's costars—and coeditor with Bill LaCapra, who was also the film's director of photography. A fine edit of *And Then?* was aired in September on Laurel Cablevision's Litchfield County access channel, followed by a live call-in program allowing viewers to make suggestions and comments to Bechard and Capobianco. Bechard has already begun preproduction of a comedy featured entitled *36-24-36!! A Curvaceous Comedy.* The half million dollar budget film is slated for completion in April 1986.

Address Unknown, produced by John Gianvito of Massachusetts, was screened at New York's Independent Feature Market and the Torino Youth Film Festival in Italy in October. Ninety minutes in length, *Address Unknown* consists of five episodes, each a "cinemagraphic letter" addressed to someone who could not receive it. The segments, which range from 11 to 29 minutes, are *Letter to an Unborn Child,* directed by Cindy Kleine; *Letter to a Romantic Ideal,* directed by Gianvito; *Letter to an Innocent Victim,* by Karine Hrechdakian; *Letter to a Suicide,* by John Campbell; and *Letter to the Unknown,* by Luc Courchesne. The five directors met at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and conceived the concept as "a good way to make a feature with minimal cost." *Address Unknown* is in black and white, and portions were transferred to 16mm from video and Super-8.

Demonstrating that AIVF members are not without a sense of humor, Michael Di Lauro of Bulldog Film and Video in Philadelphia recently completed a director of photography gig on **Philadelphia Vice**, a short promotional film touting local station KYW-TV's fall program season. Written and directed by station staffer Ed Aaronson, the piece features the entire KYW-TV sales department and pays tribute to a certain current popular TV series. Shot on location in Philadelphia's Old City and a go-go bar in nearby Jersey, *Philadelphia Vice* captures the surreal, nightmare quality of the beginning of the fall television season.

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Building Bombs: Mark Mori, Box 5202 Sta. E, Atlanta, GA 30307, (404) 627-2485; *All Our Lives/De Toda La Vida:* Turning Tide Productions, Box 1008, Amherst, MA 01004, (413) 548-9375; *Voices:* Travelling Image Company, Box 14261, Portland, OR 97214; *Island of the "Bounty":* Cochran Film Productions, 110 Tiburon Blvd., Studio 3, Mill Valley, CA 94941, (415) 388-2371; *From Stump to Ship;* Sheldon Weiss Productions, Blue Hill Falls, ME 04615, (207) 374-2736; *And Then?:* Generic Films, Inc., Box 2715, Waterbury, CT 06723, (203) 756-3017; *Address Unknown:* Snakeskin Films, 11 Oak St., Belmont, MA 02178, (617) 484-7014; *Philadelphia Vice;* Bulldog Film and Video, Inc., 3332 W. Penn St., Philadelphia, PA 19129, (215) 843-3455.

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This is my last In and Out of Production column. In order to concentrate on development for AIVF and FIVF, I'm stepping out of the contributing editor ranks of *The Independent.* In two years of writing the column, I've greatly enjoyed meeting and speaking with independent producers from all over the U.S. Each film or video project has a unique story—the way it was financed, perhaps, or how it got produced. Sometimes human interest unpredictably intervenes. The ingenuity independent mediamakers exhibit in getting a production completed often seems endless, though the creative environment we live in is tougher now than it was in the golden days of plentiful grants and fellowships. From the heady heights of those hefty budgets supported by public funds to the shrinking short film market, to the production and development deals done with the new distributor, the independent producing game is one of constantly shifting trends. But, so far, one thing has remained constant: the number and quality of independent projects has continued to grow along with the field and the community.

Information and photos for the column should be submitted to *The Independent,* AIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012, attn: In and Out of Production.

PRODUCING FOR PEANUTS

Early in the summer of this year, AIVF received a brief letter from Teena Delfina of Ava, Missouri, describing her six and a half minute videotape-in-progress, *Crystal Mountain.* Produced by Athena Peanut of Mt. Ida, Arkansas, shot and edited by Delfina, the tape is a docudrama about two women who discover that quartz crystals are being stripmined in the Crystal Mountain National Forest near Hot Springs, Arkansas. A small felt bag containing the cystals accompanied the letter. Several months later, an intriguing story of some very independent women producers emerges from the Oachita Mountain region.

Peanut intends to use *Crystal Mountain* for organizing to get information to people in the area about stripmining, so they will mobilize to stop it. Additionally, Delfina hopes to expand the piece into a longer documentary on the situation. So far, the tape has cost $400. Another $1,000 is needed to produce the larger project, which will be shot on Super-8 and then transferred to video. The work-in-progress was screened in August at the Michigan Wimmin's Music Festival to get feedback and determine how to proceed with the production.

The producers of *Crystal Mountain* describe isolation and being out of touch with "other filmmakers and vidiots" as being a result of their lifestyle and their chosen locale. Living in the country, on "wimmin's land," with "no regular job" or telephone causes the terms "low-budget" and "small-scale production" to take on new dimensions. Delfina, who left Chicago—and access to equipment and facilities—accepts that even small projects can take a long, hard time. She travels three states: Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri, going as far as Corpus Christi to utilize public access facilities for post-production. A dearth of Super-8 equipment in the region resulted in a two year wait in order to edit one 12-minute project.

Although it's easier to get access to video equipment—a fact that has caused Delfina to switch from film to the small-screen medium —three or four hours of editing time at the public access channel in nearby Fayetteville, Arkansas, must be booked up to a month in advance and meticulously prepared for, often to no avail when equipment breaks down. Add to that a four hour drive, finding a friend's place to stay the night, and working off the bill by bartering. A picture emerges that might tempt urban producers to kiss the floors of their subway trains and smile as they breathe carbon monoxide fumes on their way to one of dozens of postproduction houses in New York, Boston, San Francisco, or Chicago.

Independent to the last, Delfina also does her own distribution. Contact her in care of Dolphin Distribution, Rt. 1, Box 395, Ava, Missouri 65608.

—MG

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NOTICES

The Independent's **Notices** are undergoing renovations. Over the past few years this section of the magazine has expanded as our membership has grown. Because of the increased length and accompanying increases in production costs for the magazine, we have decided to institute several changes that will make the column more practical and help offset the expenses. The section titled "Editing Facilities" has been renamed "Postproduction." All notices related to editing, negative matching, sound transfers, and other postproduction services now appear in this section. Preproduction, production, and other film and videomaking services are listed under "Freelancers."

In the March 1986 issue we will divide the **Notices** into two categories: **Classified** and **Notices.** The new **Classifieds** column will include all listings now appearing under the "Buy ● Rent ● Sell," "Freelancers," and "Postproduction" headings. There will be a $15 charge and 250-character limit for each entry in one issue. Listings in these sections will be restricted to **members only.** Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion and indicate the number of issues on the submitted copy. Each classified must be typed, doubled-spaced, and worded exactly as it should appear. Remember the 250-character restriction (approximately 5 lines). All submissions must be accompanied by a check or money order–no cash. And no classifieds will be accepted by telephone.

Deadlines for **Notices** and **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, two months prior to the cover date of the issue., e.g., December 8 for the March issue. Members should keep in mind the dates of our double issues: January/February and August/September. Mail classifieds to: Independent Classifieds, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

Buy ● Rent ● Sell

● *FOR SALE:* Complete ¾" editing system: JVC CR-825OU tape handler, ¾" videocassette recorder, JVC CP-555OU player/edit source, JVC RM-86U editing control unit, all necessary cable hookups included. 1½ years old, in excellent cond. $7,200 complete. (201) 721-4067, NJ.

● *FOR SALE:* JVC KY310 3-tube saticon camera in perfect cond. (used for less than 30 hrs) w/ 2 DC batteries, AC adaptor, cable & carrying case. No lens. $3,000. Call (518) 854-3068 for info. Camera can also be seen & tested in New York. (212) 777-5100, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* New Panasonic ½" VHS-NV 8500 editing system, incl. NV A-500 controller, 2 decks & 2 12" monitors. Rental: weekly, $600; monthly, $1,300. Kathleen, (212) 293-2000, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Nagra 111, no sync, $800. Arri-S pkg. w/ Zeiss 12.5–75, 50mm Cooke lens, 2 400' mags, var. spd. mtr., battery & case, $1,900. (414) 263-7478, WI.

● *FOR SALE:* Edison cylinder phonograph (w/ horn, 4 disks), no needle, working condition, collector's item, $300. Used 16mm 1200' metal reels & cans, at ½ list price. (212) 749-1250, weekdays 9 to 5, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* French Eclair ACL, 12–120 Angenieux lens, 2 motors, 1 400' mag, 1 200' mag, battery, chgr, lens shade, filters, traveling case. Recent overhaul, $3,750. Nagra 111, crystal sync, AC adaptor, headset, cables, EV 644 super card. mic. Mint, $1,800. Also editing equipment. (212) 982-6054, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Steenbeck, 8-plate, 2 picture head. Finley-Hill soundbox. Rent: $500–650/month. Sale: $13,000. (415) 864-6714, CA.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony VO 4800 w/BVU modification, BP 60 battery, under 75 hrs. record time, no playback use. Mint cond., $1,950. Also EV 644 super cardioid mic, v.g., $135. 3 gang 35mm–1 gang 16mm sync, $150. Marita Simpson, (212) 982-6054, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* 35 BL11, 16 S.R., Zeiss super speed lenses, Nagra recorder, 16mm 6-plate editing table. Film Friends, 16 E. 17th St., NYC 10003, (212) 620-0084.

● *FOR SALE:* Angenieux 12–120 lens; Canon 12–120 macro lens, like new; 1200' BL mag. Must sell. Price negotiable & very reasonable. Bill Wadsworth Prods., 2404 Rio Grande, Austin, TX 78705, (512) 478-2971.

● *FOR SALE:* Must sell ASAP. Prefer package deal: JVC KY310 3-tube camera w/ broadcast quality boards, hardcase, 2 Nicad batteries, lights, AC adapter & new Portabrace case; Bogen fluid head tripod w/ dolly; JVC 4400U ¾" portable recorder w/ new battery & Portabrace case; JVC CR6300U ¾" recorder w/ tuner, audio dub & edit; JVC 6200 ½" portable recorder w/ AC adaptor charger, batteries, audio dub & video insert; JVC 2600 ½" portable w/tuner, battery, audio dub & video insert; Sanyo 6300 ½" Beta recorder; Hybrid 8 special effects generator; Mindset Hi-Resolution Computer w/ dual disc drive, joy stick, mouse & software incl. Time Arts Lumena, Designer, D.O.S. & GW-BASIC; Recoton Model V615 stereo color processor; 600w lights w/ case & stands, xtra bulbs & barndoors; 1000w lights w/case & stands; air-cooled 2000/1000w lights w/ stands, filters, doors & xtra bulbs. Pkg. also incl. mics, cable, misc. connectors, cases, bags, etc. All equipment in new to excellent condition, most manuals included. Entire pkg. $10,500. Video Events, 4620 Grove, Skokie, IL 60076, (312) 677-2578.

● *FOR RENT:* 2 offices in downtown NYC. High floor w/ terrace overlooking Greenwich Village and Hudson River. Private entrance. Mail accepted by main office. Excellent for editing room & production office w/ conference & screening room & copying machine available. $750/month. Contact Louise Greaves, (212) 206-1213, NYC.

● *WANTED:* Sony 1610 or 1710 Camera Control Unit w/ Sony model CMA-6. (212) 222-0724/925-7666, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* 16mm Auricon Super 1200 camera, TVT Shutter, Filmagnetic, 17-85 Pan Cinor lens, 1200' mag., complete $1,095. D4 Film Studios, Inc. (617) 444-0226, MA.

● *WANTED:* Low-priced loft for ongoing experimental video shoots. Approx. 60'×60', high ceiling, no columns, available on 24 hr. basis during shoot. (212) 719-2133, M–F, 9–5, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony 2850-A ¾", just overhauled, $2,500 plus freight. Mike, (305) 554-7453, FL.

● *FOR SALE:* Sony VCR VO 1800 ¾", $350. Lynitron Sharp monitor 17", $250. Good condition. Together $500 or best offer. Guido, (212) 228-6349, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* Complete Betacam system, plus lighting and Stereo Nagra Time Code sound equipment. Call collect, (803) 538-2709, NC.

● *FOR SALE:* Eclair magazines, spare body & Angenieux Primes. Lowell Quartz D Kits (new), $699. Bell & Howell 2709 Animation Camera, 16 or 35mm, $3,800. MP 30 35mm portable projector, like new, $395. Arri, Bolex & Beaulieu accessories. Tony, (201) 659-4430, NJ.

● *FOR SALE:* Eclair ACL with Cinema Products crystal & var. speed motor. 3 200' magazines, 12–75mm Ang. T2.2.3 batteries, power cable & case. Best offer over $500; (718) 236-0153, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Moviola Jr. M-79 editor. 1 pic., 3 sound 24 fps, "poor man's Steenbeck," $750. Peter Wallach Films; (314) 725-8952, MO.

● *FOR SALE:* Used 16mm 6-plate Steenbeck editing table. Excellent value. (212) 246-5522, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Editing equipment, Steenbeck (16mm 6 plate) & Universal Kem (16/35mm, 8-plate, 2 pix). Reasonable. (212) 924-0400, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* Complete Betacam system, plus lighting & Stero Nagra time code sound equipment. Call collect; (803) 538-2709, SC.

● *FOR SALE:* ¾" video deck, JVC 5000, player with rf. $250 or best offer. Wendy; (718) 624-3506, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Nagra 4.2L w/ crystal, QPAUT, QGX, QSL1, ATN. Sennheiser 816T w/ shockmount & foam windscreen. 3 ECM-50PS mics. Shure M-67 mixer, cables & accs. Excellent condition. $5,000; (312) 664-6482, IL.

● *FOR SALE:* Aaton, 16mm package w/ or w/out Ang. 12:120. Excellent condition. Warranty. Nesya; (212) 477-5036, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* New 16mm Steenbeck, # ST 1901, 6-plate, super 16, stereo, optical sound head, rewinder; (718) 441-3615, NYC.

● *FOR SALE:* Cinemonta 6-plate flatbed. Perfect. $13,500. Uher 4200, Bolex H-8 double S-8, Nikon 200mm, precision 3-4-gang synchronizers, Nizo s-800 barney 2-Mitchell 16mm 400' mags. Best offer. Mr. Clifford; (415) 444-3074, CA.

● *FOR RENT IN NICARAGUA:* Sony M-3

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Don't look any further for essential media tomes. These titles are available at AIVF.

The Independent Film & Video Makers Guide
by Michael Wiese, $14.95

How To Prepare Budgets for Film & Video
by Michael Wiese, $14.95

Motion Picture, TV & Theatre Directory
Motion Picture Enterprises, $5.95

Selected Issues in Media Law
by Michael F. Mayer, $2.50

Get The Money & Shoot
by Bruce Jackson, $15.00

Copyright Primer
by Joseph B. Sparkman, $3.50

Independent Feature Film Production
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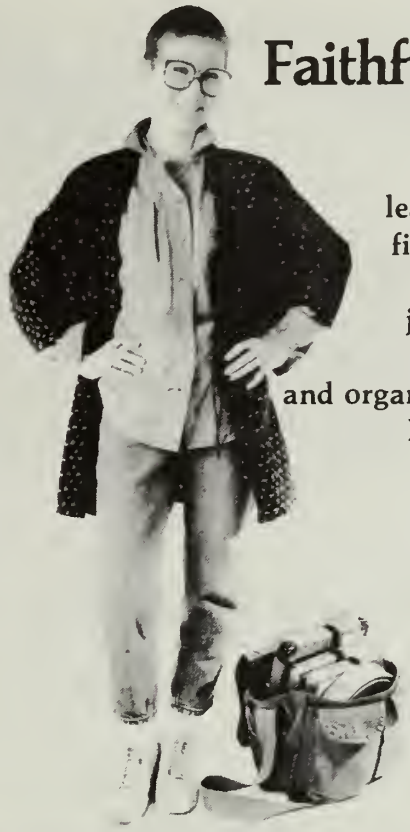
Beyond Video: Media Alliance Directory i
Media Alliance, $2.50

Film & Video Service Profiles
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$5.00 (film), $6.75 (video)

The AIVF Guide to Distributors
by Wendy Lidell, Mary Guzzy
$7.00 members, $8.95 non-members

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● *FOR RENT:* 6-plate Steenbeck editing room. Fully equipped w/ phone. Special rates for independents; (212) 736-3074, NYC.

Conferences ● Workshops

● *VIDEOSHOW AND VIDEO PRODUCTION CONFERENCE:* 12th annual event, Long Beach Convention Center, Los Angeles, May 13–16. Topics of the more than 40 workshops & seminars include: program preproduction; editing; special effects; lighting; maintenance & facility management. L.A. Chapter of the Int'l Television Association will hold sessions for video managers & other video professionals. Products & services of over 175 companies to be exhibited. Runs concurrently w/ 2nd annual Long Beach Independent Video Festival. For info contact Lisa Welp, The Professional Videoshow, 51 Sugar Hollow Road, Danbury, CT 06810; (203) 743-2120.

● *MEDIA ACTIVISM IN THE EIGHTIES:* Media can be a powerful tool for social awareness & change. Help develop an agenda, bring ideas & energy to a meeting on Dec. 4 at 7 p.m. at Media Network, 208 W. 13th St., NYC; (212) 620-0877.

● *NATIVE AMERICANS IN MEDIA:* A free symposium at the Department of Cultural Affairs, NYC, Dec. 13, 12:30–6:30 p.m. Limited travel assistance available to Native Americans producers in New York State. New film documentaries will be shown at the American Museum of Natural History, Sat., Dec. 14, 10:15 a.m.–6 p.m. & video will be screened Sunday, Dec. 15, 1–5 p.m. at the American Indian Community House Gallery. Weekend screenings are free. For more info, contact Film & Video Center, Museum of the American Indian, B'way & 155th St., New York, NY 10032; (212) 283-2420.

Films ● Tapes Wanted

● *MEET THE FILMMAKER:* Series at Brooklyn College Institute for Retired Professionals & International Center in NY (foreign gov. reps & others). Your presence, short films & promotional literature will help popularize your creations. Contact Sol Rubin (charter member AIVF), Box 40, NYC 10038.

● *FRENCH NON-THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTOR* looking for sports films, traditional & novelty: car, motorcycle, bike races, American rugby & football, sled dogs, etc. Contact American rep. Ruth J. Feldman, (213) 394-2984, 1433 10th St. #7, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

● *INDEPENDENT PRODUCER SEEKS FOOTAGE* of Vietnam veterans, protests, anti-war demonstrations, speeches & actions by Ron Kovic for *Born on the Fourth of July,* 16mm documentary portrait of Vietnam vet, author, activist Ron Kovic. Contact Loretta Smith, Flower of the Dragon Pro-

ductions, 3635 N. Paulina St., Chicago IL 60613; (312) 327-8592.

● *INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION COMPANY* seeks non-exclusive distributors for instructional video, "Interview Techniques and Resume Tips for the Job Applicant." Contact: Bennu Productions, Inc., 165 Madison Ave., NYC 10016; (212) 519-2727/213-8511.

● *WNYC TV—CHANNEL 31,* Manhattan Cable Channel 3, is looking for narrative film & video, 30 min. or less, for spring series *WNYC Mini Playhouse.* Send ¾" preview cassettes to Acquisitions Dept., WNYC-TV, One Centre St., New York, NY 10007.

● *INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER* looking for distributor for feature independent underground films & shorts on satirical social topics, comedy, documentary & sexual politics. Contact Cinema of Transgression; (212) 228-1896, NYC.

● *CABARET THEATRE* seeks all types of independent film & video projects of any length for presentation to public in varied program. Contact Lynn Waltz, On Stage, Cab'ret, 2020 Sansom St., Philadelphia, PA 19103; (215) 675-0741.

● *W 45AB-TV,* the Inner Entertainment Channel, seeks films & videotapes for local cable TV channel. Contact Ademah Hackshaw, W 45AB-TV, Box 1037, Kingshill, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands 00850; (809) 778-9045.

● *DISTRIBUTOR* looking for independent film & video productions. Of special interest: children's films; shorts; films on outstanding Americans or U.S. issues for distribution in Europe; (718) 441-3615, NYC.

● *CINCINNATI ARTISTS GROUP EFFORT (CAGE)* is accepting ¾" video tapes for open screening series. Eight 1 hr. programs to lead off 8 open screening sessions. All work shown; very long works prescreened & possibly excerpted. Three deadlines: Jan. 15; Mar. 15; May 15. Send tapes w/ return postage & mailer to C.A.G.E., Box 1362, Cincinnati, OH 45201; (513) 381-2437.

● *LOCUSFOCUS VIDEO MAGAZINE* is looking for submissions for a new weekly half-hour cable show to be shown Thursdays, 9 pm on Group W & Manhattan Cable in NYC. Any genre, excerpts OK. Please clearly label box & cassette with title, name, address & phone. Sponsored by Locus Communications, 250 W. 57th St., Ste. 1229, NYC 10019; (212) 757-4220.

● *PAPER TIGER TV SATELLITE PROJECT* seeks tapes on community/political issues for series to be shown on public access channels across the country in spring 1986. Strong point of view & local focus desired on subjects of racism, housing, farming, feminism, disarmament, environment, Central America, free speech, pop culture/alternative culture, international issues with community focus, gay/lesbian rights & youth. *Do not send tapes.* Contact Paper Tiger TV, 165 W. 91 St., #14F, New York, NY 10024; or call Martha Wallner, (212) 260-6565; Caryn Rogoff, (212) 663-3887; or Daniel Brooks, (212) 768-4480.

Freelancers

● *VIDEO PRODUCTION/POSTPRODUCTION SPECIALIST:* Experienced in producing, directing, shooting & editing; studio & remotes. Willing to work with you or for you. Kingsley Allison, (212) 760-7695, days; (212) 893-7986, eves, NYC.

● *COMPOSER FOR FILM:* International award winner. Classically trained, but not limited. Can score anything. Gerald Brennan, (313) 668-0016, MI.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER/EX-DANCER:* Consultation & production services for dancers, low-budget broadcast production pkg., incl. DXC M3 camera; VHS or Beta documentation of rehearsals. ¾" editing $20/hr. Dubbing $12/hr. Penny Ward Video, (212) 228-1427/431-5282, NYC.

● *LOS ANGELES GAFFER/KEY GRIP:* 8 yrs experience in features, commercials, educational & industrial films. Location package available. Doug Cragoe, (818) 763-2400, CA.

● *COMPUTERIZED FILM/VIDEO BUDGET PREPARATION:* Producer/director w/ Ikegami 77, excellent cond. References on request. Reasonable per diem rates. Will travel. Computerized audio-visuals & more. P. Greg Alland, (212) 420-0953, NYC.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER:* W/ complete 16mm pkg.; experienced in all types of production. Fluent French & Spanish, free to travel, reels available. Pedro Bonilla, (213) 454-8909, CA.

● *ACTRESS FOR VOICEOVER WORK, TRANSLATOR:* Spanish & French. Sample tape of work done for Ministry of Education of Nicaragua. R. Pikser, (212) 222-0865, NYC.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER AVAILABLE* w/ Sony DXC-M3A, new VO 6800, mics, lights & transportation for local, national & international industrials, docs, theater, dance, music. Negotiable rates. Video Jello, J. Maxtone-Graham, (718) 636-5590, NYC.

● *PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/WRITER:* 8 yrs. experience at *ABC News* in NYC. Also organized production of award-winning half-hour TV drama. M. Wheeler, (212) 595-5947, NYC.

● *VIDEOMAKER:* Experienced TV scripting, production & postproduction skills. Many crew & talent contacts in Chicago area. J. Brooks, (312) 761-7036; Box 1108, 6151 N. Winthrop, Chicago, IL 60640; (312) 761-7036.

● *PRODUCTION HELP:* Available afternoons, evenings, weekends for work in film/video productions. Inexpensive, energetic, responsible service in exchange for more experience & contacts. Otie Brown, (212) 765-7322/210-5493 (work), NYC.

● *ORIGINAL MUSIC & LYRICS* for film & video. Composing & production, free demo. Dennis Rivellino, Media Music Productions, (914) 759-5734, NY.

● *VIDEOTAPING SERVICES:* Award-winning producers specializing in documentary reportage & arts documentation. ¾" & ½" pkgs. available; also, audio recordist with Nagra 4.2L & mics seeks interesting & unusual employment. Contact Paul Kornblueh, (212) 619-8298, NYC.

● *PRODUCTION COMPANY* available for commercial or independent projects. Full-service: from budget to shooting to showing. In-house producer, director, cinematographer, production manager, production assistants & van. Film & video. Contact Phyllis Adams, (212) 334-9199, NYC.

● *FILM PACKAGING, PRESENTATIONS & PRODUCING.* Previous packages available for consideration. Reasonable prices, classy packages; short notice OK. Shootfire Films, 272 Bowery, 3rd Floor, NYC 10012; (212) 334-9199.

● *COMPLETE 16MM PRODUCTIONS AVAILABLE:* Take ideas from start to finish. Arriflex,

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● *QUANTEL PAINTBOX:* Top-of-the-line, user friendly graphics computer is available to artists at very reduced rates on stand-by basis. Fee includes operator &/or instruction. Also rehearsal & performances documented on high quality ½". $35. Jill; (212) 929-7434, NYC.

● *PRODUCTION ASSISTANT:* Experience w/ commercial shoots, video sale to the public, ¾" video camera. Certified Mobil laser operator. Background in still nature & wildlife photography. Driver's license. Willing to work on documentaries or features for reasonable pay. Willing to travel. Barbara; (516) 829-9829, NY.

● *PRODUCTIONS IN WASHINGTON, DC:* Producer/director & local Emmy-winning editor team up w/ researcher/writer to form Blandburg Productions, Inc. Tighten your budget, we'll manage your production in DC. We offer full production crew & individual skills. Vic Blandburg; (703) 849-8599 or Blandburg Productions, Inc., Box 2254, Merrifield, VA 22116.

● *CINEMATOGRAPHER/LIGHTING CAMERAMAN:* 35 BL & 16 SR, super speed primes & zoom lenses. Reasonable rates. Vini, Film Friends, (212) 620-0084; NYC.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER:* Chicago/Midwest location, w/Sony M3 camera & broadcast gear. Available to shoot news, commercials, theater/dance, locations. Complete ENG package & crew as needed. Demo reel available. Bob Hercules; (312) 772-0718, IL.

● *VIDEOGRAPHER:* ½" production for cost-cutters. Industrial equip. Lights, 2 cameras, van, assemble edits. $120 day, NJ, PA, MD & DE. Greg Savoy; (302) 478-8024, DE.

● *TRANSCRIPTION SERVICES* are the only thing we do. Transfers, dialogue, script, public relations. Soundvisions, Box 2055, River Grove, IL 60171; (312) 453-1829.

● *DIRECTOR/PRODUCER ASSISTANT:* Excellent qualifications in writing, research, correspondence, typing & all aspects of office procedure. Film & art background. Reliable, highly organized, seeking 10–12 hrs/wk. References. (212) 226-0847, NYC.

● *FILM EDITOR:* Looking for work on features, documentaries, etc. 25 yrs. exp. Own 6-plate Steenbeck, work at my place or yours. Bob Machover, (212) 677-1401, NYC.

Opportunities ● Gigs

● *EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR* w/ successful exp. in management of large media arts or similar arts nonprofit organization. Strong track record in development, fiscal & organizational planning, community relations & outreach. Interpersonal skills essential. Salary 25–30K. Boston Film/Video Foundation, Dept. A, 1126 Boylston St., Boston MA 02215.

● *BTSC* seeks part-time film coordinator w/ distribution exp. Call Carl Clay at (718) 527-0836 for details, NYC.

● *FEATURE FILM CREW:* Independent production company in pre-production on feature film. Principal photography in Washington, DC., Spring 1986. Seeking 1st & 2nd asst. directors, editors, unit manager, camera & sound crews, wardrobe, grips, gaffers, special effects personnel & other crew positions. Must have solid prior experience & be willing to work non-union. Send resume or call Chorvinsky Studios, 411 Howard Ave., Kensington, MD 20895, (301) 564-1433.

● *EDITOR* wanted to work on feature documentary about Civil War. Contact: James Agee Film Project, 155 Stribling Ave., Charlottesville, VA 22903, (804) 295-0262.

● *PART-TIME SALES REP* wanted to develop industry clientele for film & video services. Salary plus commission. R. Larsen. Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

● *PART-TIME INSTRUCTORS NEEDED.* Spring & summer sessions. 16mm Film Production, Documentary Video, Directors Project, Color Video Cameras, Screenwriting & Video Basics Production. Salary commensurate w/ experience. Send resume, cover letter to Kim Ingraham, Media Training Coordinator, Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.

● *ANIMATOR/COLLABORATOR* needed for 20–30 minute film w/ classical music soundtrack. Contact Evan Alboum, 3143 Broadway #5B, NYC 10027; (212) 866-0378.

● *CREW NEEDED:* Producer/director needs good crew members from camera to production assistants. Will be doing professional quality projects in both 35mm & 16mm. Cameraperson must have first-class reel to show. Also looking for 2nd-hand lighting equipment. Call Tony; (212) 228-4873, NYC.

● *CO-PRODUCER* wanted for 1-hr documentary. Includes preproduction, fundraising, etc. Token pay initially, modest additional pay later. No students please. Call (212) 757-0499, NYC.

● *MUSEUM INTERNSHIP* in film and video, beginning Jan. 1, 1986. 12 months, $10,500 stipend, plus $1,000 travel expenses. Those with master's degree or commensurate experience in museum, media center, or cultural organization invited to apply. Send letter of interest, resume & letters of recommendation to Director of Film/Video, Walker Arts Center, Vineland Pl., Minneapolis, MN 55403.

Postproduction

● *¾" EDITING/POSTPRODUCTION:* Left & independent documentaries our first love. Sony 5850 system, SMPTE time code, Microgen character generator, full sound mix, Ikegami & JVC cameras, Sony BVU 110 & 4800 decks. Post is $40/hr. w/ editor. 10% discount to AIVF members. Debbie or David, 29th Street Video; (212) 594-7530, NYC.

● *NEGATIVE MATCHING:* 16mm, Super-16, 35mm cut for regular printing, blowup, or video transfer. Clean work at reasonable rates. One White Glove, Tim Brennan; (718) 897-4145, NYC.

● *16MM NEGATIVE MATCHING:* A&B rolls cut at reasonable rates. Bruce; (212) 228-7352, NYC.

● *FILM TITLE SERVICES:* Camera-ready art &/or shooting of titles. Many typefaces, design consultation, crawls. Reasonable rates, fast service. (212) 460-8921, NYC.

● *16MM EDITING & POSTPRODUCTION:* In sunny Oakland. 6-plate Euro-flatbed, 2 fully equipped benches & motorized sync; adjacent transfers, projection, narration recording & free parking. 24 hr. access. BAVC, FAF, AIVF discount. (415) 436-6978, CA.

● *VHS EDITING:* ¾" sophisticated audio equalization & mixing. Hi-speed search. Professional quality. Doug Ingber; (212) 923-4789, NYC.

● *FILM-TO-TAPE:* 8mm to S-8 to tape, custom care for your originals & outstanding transfer quality; mastered to ¾" or ½" w/ non-synchronous or post-synch audio available. Audio recordings w/ Nagra 4.2L & mics for interesting & unusual employment. Videotaping services from Amalgam Prods.; award-winning producers specializing in documentary reportage & arts documentation, w/ ¾" & ½" available. Paul Kornblueh; (212) 691-8298, NYC.

● *EDITING FACILITIES:* Sony 5850-RM440 4 track audio. New equipment. Any hrs. VHS Dubs. Mike; (305) 554-7435, FL $30–40/hr.

● *EDITING FACILITIES:* ¾" video editing for daily, weekly or project basis. (212) 966-6326, NYC.

● *NEG MATCHING:* 16mm, 35mm. Clean, accurate. Andre, Coda Film; (212) 265-1191, NYC.

● *½" VIDEO EDITING AT KEY LIGHT:* Edit your documentary, narrative, industrial, music video & performance tape on our new JVC editing system. $25–30/hr. w/ editor. Key Light Productions; (212) 581-0748, NYC.

● *QUALITY EDITING ROOM FOR LESS:* ¾" & VHS-to-¾" w/ Convergence Super 90, Tapehandlers, Adda TBS, fades, time-code reader-generator, overdubs. New equipment, comfortable & friendly environment, Lincoln Center area. $20/hr. during business hours for AIVF members editing non-commercial projects. Also available: experienced editors, scripting, Chyron. Hank Dolmatch TV Enterprises; (212) 874-4524.

● *SOHO ON BAYOU:* Kingfish Productions, director from New Orleans introduces full service Betacam productions & ¾" off-line editing services w/ red beans 'n rice. Convenient Soho location, low rates for independents. (212) 925-8448, NYC.

● *MIDTOWN OFFICE SPACE* available, close to all the trade labs, supply houses, etc. Active film organization w/ screening facilities for film & video. 300 sq. feet. Looking for compatible artist. $14/sq. foot. Call (212) 947-9477, NYC.

● *FOR RENT:* 6-plate Steenbeck editing table. Reasonable rates in your workspace; (718) 625-3824, NYC.

Publications

● *NEED FILM FINANCING?* Limited partnership offerings are one of the best means of financing independent productions of any size. Send for a 96-page private offering memorandum used for a recent offering. Using this offering as a guideline, it is possible to save thousands in legal fees. Send $29.95 to Cinema Financing Ltd., Box 2246, Rockville, MD 20852.

● *CPB DIRECTORY AVAILABLE:* 1985–86 edition of the *CPB Public Broadcasting Directory* now on sale. Lists CPB-qualified radio & TV stations, incl. staff, nat'l & regional public broadcasting organizations, state agencies & commissions & related organizations. Send $5 per copy to Publications Sales, CPB, 1111 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. All orders must be prepaid.

● *INDEPENDENT VIDEO,* issue no. 44/45, July/August, 1985 available from The Media Centre, South Hill Park, Bracknell, Berkshire, England.

● *JOURNAL OF ARTS MANAGEMENT & LAW* publishes articles on policy, taxation, labor relations, marketing & technology. $29.95 for a 1-year subscription. Write to 4000 Albermarle St., N.W., Washington, DC 20016.

● *GUIDE TO FILMS ON APARTHEID* available from Media Network. Incl. evaluative descriptions of 45 of the best films, tapes & slide shows on the history of apartheid & resistance movements; a special section on other countries of the southern Africa region & tips on how to plan a successful film program. $2.50 each. Media Network, 208 W. 13th St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 620-0877.

Resources ● Funds

● *PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY:* Individual & group counselling to independent artists & freelancers. Highly trained w/ years of experience. Specializes in problems of interpersonal relationships, artistic careers, rearing of young children. Reduced rates for AIVF members. Judith Smith, CSW; (212) 691-6695, NYC.

● *COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE FOR SOCIAL ISSUE MEDIA:* Offered by Media Network. Computerized listing of over 3,000 titles of films, videotapes & slide shows from a wide range of social issues. Cross-referenced by title, subject & distributor availability. Will answer requests for info on specific titles & provide subject searches. Service is free to members; nominal charge to non-members. Contact Media Network; (212) 620-0877, NYC.

● *ART COM TELEVISION:* Offers a full range of services to broadcasters & closed circuit presenters. Can supply single videotape selections or complete packages. Specialize in programming computer graphics, dance, humor, music, performance & experimental works. Contact Art Com Television, Box 3123 Rincon Annex, San Francisco, CA 94119; (415) 431-7524.

● *ARTS ARBITRATION & MEDIATION SERVICES* assists in settling disputes quickly in an atmosphere of conciliation & fairness. Offered by Bay Area Lawyers for the Arts, Building B, Rm. 300, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco, CA 94123; (415) 775-7715 or 775-7200.

● *FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY CABLE TV* grants program is now accepting applications for projects which encourage the use of California's community service cable channels. Grants are available to California, nonprofit, educational & government agencies; individuals are ineligible. First-time cable users are encouraged to apply. High priority is given to projects that involve, train, or serve women & minorities. Applications from organizations run by women & minorities are encouraged. FCSCT grants support programming for cablecasting on the community educational & municipal channels in California. FCSCT, 5010 Geary Blvd., Ste. 3, San Francsco, CA 94118.

Trims ● Glitches

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to Jerome Foundation grant winners James Byrne, Mary Filippo, Margia Kramer, Leslie Thornton & Sheila McLaughlin.

● *CONGRATULATIONS* to South Carolina Arts Commission grantees Isabel Hill, Jan Millsaps, Robert Landau & Nancy Yasecko.

● *WE ARE PLEASED* to announce that Craig Davidson has received a Boston Film/Video Foundation fellowship and a Connecticut Commission on the Arts grant for his upcoming project *Reporting America, 1920–1950.*

● *KUDOS* to Rose Bond, the 1985 winner of the Oregon Arts Commission film production grant for an animated piece entitled *Cerridwen's Gift.*

● *CALL FOR MEDIA ON DISARMAMENT:* The disarmanent group PRO Peace is organizing a 9-month march from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., beginning March 1, 1986. At each day's encampment, educational screenings will be held for the marchers & members of the community. Tapes, slide shows & films on peace, the arms race, nonviolence & global security are needed. Tax-deductible contributions & volunteers to help contact filmmakers will also be greatly appreciated. For more info, contact Sally Mason or Barbara Zheutlin, PRO Peace, 8159 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048, (213) 653-6245.

● *ABBIE HOFFMAN MEDIA TOUR OF NICARAGUA:* Specially geared to people who work in print, TV, radio, film & video. Incl. trip to northern border region. Cost: $825 incl. RT airfare Mexico-Managua, hotels, translators, transportation, 2 meals/day. Call (212) 460-5877, NYC.

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HELP NEEDED IN MEXICO

The earthquake that leveled large sectors of Mexico City on September 19, 1985, destroyed lives. With the collapse of over 500 factories, it also revealed an ongoing injustice: the horrible working conditions in the textile mills. An independent filmmaking group, Zafra, has initiated a documentary project, *Under the Rubble: The Making of an Industry,* focusing on the particular plight of the women clothing workers, brought into the public eye by the tragedy. To complete the project, Zafra needs: 7291 Kodak 16mm filmstock, 50 rolls of 400 ft. each; 16mm magnetic tape, 30 rolls; 50 ¼" audio tapes; optical soundtrack negative, 4,000 ft.; development, stock, and services of rushes, 32,000 ft.; and postproduction services.

Those who wish to contribute money, stock, or services, write "Women in Clothing Industries" Project, Zafra A.C., c/o Bertha Navarro, Maricarmen de Lara, Leonardo Da Vinci #82, Mixcoac 03910, Mexico D.F. 19; tel. 5 63 07 09 or 6 52 21 20; telex TPTPME-1773197.

NOTA BENE

The Independent's Notices are undergoing renovations. Over the past few years this section of the magazine has expanded as our membership has grown. Because of the increased length and the accompanying increases in production costs for the magazine, we have decided to institute several changes that will make the column more practical and help offset the expenses. Beginning with this issue, the section titled "Editing Facilities" has been renamed "Postproduction." All notices related to editing, negative matching, sound transfers, and other postproduction services will appear in this section. Preproduction, production, and other film and videomaking services will be listed under "Freelancers."

In the March 1986 issue we will divide the **Notices** into two categories: **Classifieds** and **Notices**. The new **Classifieds** column will include all listings now appearing under the "Buy•Rent•Sell," "Freelancers," and "Postproduction" headings. There will be a $15 charge and 250 character limit for each entry for one issue. Listings in these sections will be restricted to **members only.** Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion and indicate the number of issues on the submitted copy. Each classified must be typed, double-spaced, and worded exactly as it should appear. Remember the 250 character restriction (approximately 5 lines). All submissions must be accompanied by a check or money order—no cash, please. And no classifieds will be accepted by telephone.

Deadlines for **Notices** and **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, two months prior to the cover date of the issue., e.g., November 8 for the January/February issue. Members should keep in mind the dates of our double issues: January/February and August/September. Mail classifieds to: Independent Classifieds, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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WRITING IN WATER, documentary, video by Stephen Roszell, Chicago, Ill.

2ND PRIZE
TAYLOR CHAIN II: A STORY OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, documentary, film by Kartemquin Films, Ltd., Chicago, Ill.

2ND PRIZE
APPASTAPAS, experimental, film by Jeff Plansker & Tom Ludwig, Grosse Point, Michigan

2ND PRIZE
THE BEHOLDER, animation, film by Christopher Sullivan, Minneapolis, Minnesota

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